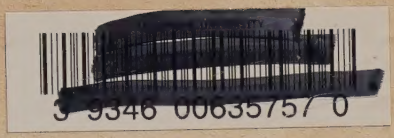
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Lytton, Edward, Lord
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DATE DUE

Still, like the cloud which drops on unseen crags
The dews the wild-flower feeds on, our ambition
May from its airy height drop gladness down
On unsuspected virtue; — and the flower
May bless the cloud when it hath passed away!

Never say *fail* again. — Brave boy!

[*To* JOSEPH.

He 'll be —

A bishop first.

JOSEPH.

Ah, Cardinal —

RICHELIEU.

Ah, Joseph!

[*To* LOUIS — *as* DE MAUPRAT *and* JULIE *converse apart.*

See, my liege — see through plots and counterplots —
Through gain and loss — through glory and disgrace —
Along the plains, where passionate Discord rears
Eternal Babel — still the holy stream
Of human happiness glides on!

LOUIS.

And must we
Thank for *that* also our prime Minister?

RICHELIEU.

No — let us own it: — there is ONE above
Sways the harmonious mystery of the world,
Ev'n better than prime ministers! —
Alas!
Our glories float between the earth and heaven
Like clouds which seem pavilions of the sun,
And are the playthings of the casual wind;

JULIE.

Ah, tears like these, my liege,
Are dews that mount to Heaven.

LOUIS.

Rise — rise — be happy.
[RICHELIEU *beckons to* DE BERINGHEN.

DE BERINGHEN (*falteringly*).

My Lord — you are — most — happily — recovered.

RICHELIEU.

But you are pale, dear Beringhen: — this air
Suits not your delicate frame — I long have thought so: —
Sleep not another night in Paris: — Go, —
Or else your precious life may be in danger.
Leave France, dear Beringhen!

DE BERINGHEN.

I shall have time,
More than I asked for, — to discuss the pâté.
[*Exit* DE BERINGHEN.

RICHELIEU (*to* ORLEANS).

For you, repentance — absence — and confession!
[*To* FRANÇOIS.

JULIE.

No — never, Adrien — never!

LOUIS (*peevishly*).

One moment makes a startling cure, Lord Cardinal.

RICHELIEU.

Ay, Sire, for in one moment there did pass
Into this withered frame the might of France! —
My own dear France — I have thee yet — I have saved thee!
I clasp thee still! — it was thy voice that called me
Back from the tomb! — What mistress like our country!

LOUIS.

For Mauprat's pardon — well! But Julie, — Richelieu.
Leave me one thing to love! —

RICHELIEU.

A subject's luxury!
Yet, if you must love something, Sire, — *love me!*

LOUIS (*smiling in spite of himself*).

Fair proxy for a young fresh Demoiselle!

RICHELIEU.

Your heart speaks for my clients: — Kneel, my children,
And thank your King. —

RICHELIEU (*starting up*).

There, — at my feet!
[*To* First *and* Second Secretary.
Ere the clock strike! the Envoys have their answer!
[*To* Third Secretary, *with a ring.*
This to De Chavigny — he knows the rest —
No need of parchment here — he must not halt
For sleep — for food. — In *my* name, — MINE! — he will
Arrest the Duc de Bouillon at the head
Of his army! — Ho there! Count de Baradas,
Thou hast lost the stake! — Away with him!

[*As the* Guards *open the folding-doors, a view of the anteroom beyond, lined with* Courtiers. BARADAS *passes through the line.*

Ha! — ha! —

[*Snatching* DE MAUPRAT'S *death-warrant from the* Officer.

See here De Mauprat's death-writ, Julie! —
Parchment for battledores! — Embrace your husband! —
At last the old man blesses you!

JULIE.

O joy!
You are saved; you live — I hold you in these arms.

MAUPRAT.

Never to part —

JOSEPH.

See to the Cardinal!

BARADAS.

He 's dying! — and I shall yet dupe the King!

LOUIS (*rushing to* RICHELIEU).

Richelieu! — Lord Cardinal! — 't is *I* resign! —
Reign thou!

JOSEPH.

Alas! too late! — he faints!

LOUIS.

Reign, Richelieu!

RICHELIEU (*feebly*).

With absolute power? —

LOUIS.

Most absolute! — Oh! live!
If not for me — for France!

RICHELIEU.

FRANCE!

LOUIS.

Oh, this treason! —
The army — Orleans — Bouillon — Heavens! — the Spaniard! —
Where will they be next week? —

RICHELIEU.

Hold! — In this department —
A paper — here, Sire, — read yourself — then take
The Count's advice in 't.

Enter DE BERINGHEN *hastily, and draws aside* BARADAS.

[RICHELIEU, *to* Secretary, *giving an open parchment.*

BARADAS (*bursting from* DE BERINGHEN).

What! and reft it from thee!
Ha! — hold!

JOSEPH.

Fall back, son, it is your turn now!

BARADAS.

Death! — the despatch!

LOUIS (*reading*).

To Bouillon — and signed Orleans!
Baradas, too! — league with our foes of Spain! —
Lead our Italian armies — what! to Paris! —
Capture the King — my health requires repose —
Make me subscribe my proper abdication —
Orleans, my brother, Regent! — Saints of Heaven!
These are the men I loved!

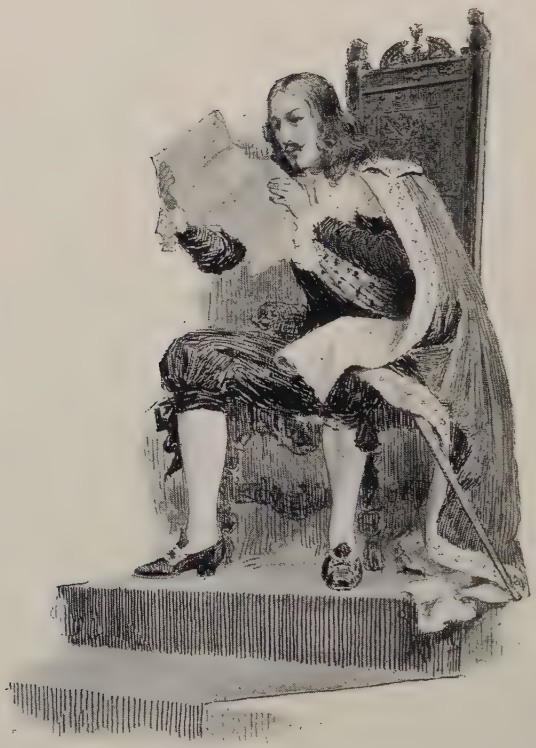
[BARADAS *draws, — attempts to rush out, — is arrested.* ORLEANS, *endeavouring to escape more quickly, meets* JOSEPH'S *eye, and stops short.*

[RICHELIEU *falls back.*

RICHELIEU.

Hush!

[*Looking at the contents.*



THIRD SECRETARY (*to* King).

Sire, the Spaniards
Have reinforced their army on the frontiers.
The Duc de Bouillon ——

Enter Gentleman, *whispers* JOSEPH, *who exit hastily.*

BARADAS (*to* Secretary).

Sir, fall back.

SECOND SECRETARY.

But ——

BARADAS.

Pshaw, Sir!

THIRD SECRETARY (*mysteriously*).

The *secret correspondence*, Sire, most urgent, —
Accounts of spies — deserters — heretics —
Assassins — poisoners — schemes against yourself! —

LOUIS.

Myself! — most urgent! — (*looking on the documents.*)

Re-enter JOSEPH *with* FRANÇOIS, *whose pourpoint is streaked with blood.* FRANÇOIS *passes behind the* Cardinal's Attendants, *and, sheltered by them from the sight of* BARADAS, *&c., falls at* RICHELIEU'S *feet.*

FRANÇOIS.

O my Lord!

RICHELIEU.

Thou art bleeding!

FRANÇOIS.

A scratch — I have not failed —— [*Gives the packet.*

BARADAS.

Yes, Sire.

(Oh that despatch! — my veins are fire!)

RICHELIEU (*feebly, but with great distinctness*).

My liege —

Forgive me — Charles's cause is lost! A man,
Named Cromwell, risen, — a great man! — your succour
Would fail — your loans be squandered! — Pause — reflect.

LOUIS.

Reflect. — Eh, Baradas?

BARADAS.

Reflect, Sire.

JOSEPH.

Humph!

LOUIS (*aside*).

I half repent! — No successor to Richelieu! —
Round me thrones totter! — dynasties dissolve! —
The soil he guards alone escapes the earthquake!

JOSEPH.

Our star not yet eclipsed! — you mark the King?
Oh! had we the despatch!

RICHELIEU.

Ah! Joseph! — Child —
Would I could help thee!

FIRST SECRETARY.

But Spain 's your deadliest foe : whatever
Can weaken Spain must strengthen France. The Cardinal
Would send the succours : — (*solemnly*) — balance, Sire, of Europe !

LOUIS.

The Cardinal ! — balance ! — We 'll consider. — Eh, Count?

BARADAS.

Yes, Sire ; — fall back.

FIRST SECRETARY.

But ——

BARADAS.

Oh ! fall back, Sir.

JOSEPH.

Humph !

SECOND SECRETARY.

The affairs of England, Sire, most urgent : Charles
The First has lost a battle that decides
One half his realm, — craves moneys, Sire, and succour.

LOUIS.

He shall have both. — Eh, Baradas?

SCENE III.

Manent RICHELIEU, MAUPRAT, *and* JULIE, *the last kneeling beside the* Cardinal; *the* Officer of the Guard *behind* MAUPRAT. JOSEPH *near* RICHELIEU, *watching the* King. LOUIS. BARADAS *at the back of the* King's *chair, anxious and disturbed.* ORLEANS *at a greater distance, careless and triumphant. The* Secretaries. *As each* Secretary *advances in his turn, he takes the portfolios from the* Sub-Secretaries.

FIRST SECRETARY.

The affairs of Portugal
Most urgent, Sire: one short month since the Duke
Braganza was a rebel.

LOUIS.

And is still!

FIRST SECRETARY.

No, Sire, *he has succeeded!* He is now
Crowned King of Portugal — craves instant succour
Against the arms of Spain.

LOUIS.

We will not grant it
Against his lawful king. Eh, Count?

BARADAS.

No, Sire.

RICHELIEU.

You would consign your armies to the bâton
Of your most honoured brother. Sire, so be it!
Your minister, the Count de Baradas;
A most sagacious choice! — Your Secretaries
Of State attend me, Sire, to render up
The ledgers of a realm. — I do beseech you,
Suffer these noble gentlemen to learn
The nature of the glorious task that waits them,
Here, in my presence.

LOUIS.

You say well, my Lord.

[*To* Secretaries, *as he seats himself.*

Approach, Sirs.

RICHELIEU.

I — I — faint! — air — air!

[JOSEPH *and a* Gentleman *assist him to a sofa, placed beneath a window.*

I thank you —

Draw near, my children.

BARADAS.

He 's too weak to question.

Nay, scarce to speak; all 's safe.

JULIE.

No! — No! —

Enter LOUIS *from the rooms beyond.*

RICHELIEU (*to* Officer).

Stay, Sir, one moment. My good liege,
Your worn-out servant, willing, Sire, to spare you
Some pain of conscience, would forestall your wishes.
I do resign my office.

DE MAUPRAT.

You!

JULIE.

All 's over!

RICHELIEU.

My end draws near. These sad ones, Sire, I love them.
I do not ask his life; but suffer justice
To halt, until I can dismiss his soul,
Charged with an old man's blessing.

LOUIS.

Surely!

BARADAS.

Sire ——

LOUIS.

Silence — small favour to a dying servant.

DE MAUPRAT.

Thy penance
For ever, wretch! — What rack is like the conscience?

JULIE.

I shall be with thee soon.

BARADAS (*giving the writ to the* Officer).

Hence, to the headsman!

[*The doors are thrown open. The* Huissier *announces* "His Eminence the Cardinal Duc de Richelieu."

Enter RICHELIEU, *attended by* Gentlemen, Pages, *&c., pale, feeble, and leaning on* JOSEPH, *followed by three* Secretaries of State, *attended by* Sub-Secretaries *with papers, &c.*

JULIE (*rushing to* RICHELIEU).

You live — you live — and Adrien shall not die!

RICHELIEU.

Not if an old man's prayers, himself near death,
Can aught avail thee, daughter! Count, you now
Hold what I held on earth: — one boon, my Lord,
This soldier's life.

BARADAS.

The stake, — my head! — you said it.
I cannot lose one trick. — Remove your prisoner.

JULIE.

Adrien, speak!
But say you wish to *live!* — if not, your wife,
Your slave, — do with me as you will.

DE MAUPRAT.

Once more! —
Why, this is mercy, Count!
Oh, think, my Julie,
Life, at the best, is short, —
but love immortal!

BARADAS (*taking* JULIE'S *hand*).

Ah, loveliest —

JULIE.

Go, that touch has made me iron.
We have decided — death!

BARADAS (*to* DE MAUPRAT).

Now say to whom
Thou gavest the packet, and thou yet shalt live.

DE MAUPRAT.

I'll tell thee nothing!

BARADAS.

Hark, — the rack!

JULIE.

That were a bitterer death!
Avaunt, thou tempter! I did ask his life —
A boon, and not the barter of dishonour.
The heart can break, and scorn you: wreak your malice;
Adrien and I will leave you this sad earth,
And pass together hand in hand to Heaven!

BARADAS.

You have decided.

[*Withdraws to the side scene for a moment and returns.*

Listen to me, Lady;
I am no base intriguer. I adored thee
From the first glance of those inspiring eyes;
With thee entwined ambition, hope, the future.
I will not lose thee! I can place thee nearest —
Ay, to the throne — nay, on the throne, perchance;
My star is at its zenith. Look upon me;
Hast thou decided?

JULIE.

No, no; you can see
How weak I am: be human, Sir — one moment.

BARADAS (*stamping his foot*, DE MAUPRAT *appears at the side of the stage guarded*).

Behold thy husband! — Shall he pass to death,
And know thou couldst have saved him?

In the dark convent's everlasting winter —
(Surely enough for justice — hate — revenge) —
But spare this life, thus lonely, scathed, and bloomless;
And when thou stand'st for judgment on thine own,
The deed shall shine beside thee as an angel.

LOUIS (*much affected*).

Go, go, to Baradas: annul thy marriage,
And ——

JULIE (*anxiously, and watching his countenance*).

Be his bride!

LOUIS.

A form, a mere decorum;
Thou know'st I love thee.

JULIE.

O thou sea of shame,
And not one star!

[*The* King *goes up the stage, and passes through the suit of rooms at the side, in evident emotion.*

BARADAS.

Well, thy election, Julie;
This hand — his grave!

JULIE.

His grave! and I —

BARADAS.

Can save him. —
Swear to be mine.

Go to the King, count with me word for word;
And while you pray the life — I write the sentence!

JULIE.

Stay, stay! (*rushing to the* King). You have a kind and
princely heart,
Though sometimes it is silent: you were born

To *power* — it has not flushed you into madness,
As it doth meaner men. Banish my husband —
Dissolve our marriage — cast me to that grave
Of human ties, where hearts congeal to ice,

JULIE.

Now I know I 'm mad;
Even that memory failed me.

BARADAS.

I am young,
Well-born and brave as Mauprat: — for thy sake
I peril what he has not — fortune — power;
All to great souls most dazzling. I alone
Can save thee from yon tyrant, now my puppet!
Be mine; annul the mockery of this marriage,
And on the day I clasp thee to my breast
De Mauprat shall be free.

JULIE.

Thou durst not speak
Thus in *his* ear (*pointing to* LOUIS). Thou double traitor! — tremble!
I will unmask thee.

BARADAS.

I will say thou ravest.
And see this scroll! its letters shall be blood!

LOUIS (*gently*).

What wouldst thou?

JULIE.

A single life. — You reign o'er millions. — What
Is *one man's* life to you? — and yet to *me*
'T is France — 't is earth — 't is everything! — a life,
A human life — my husband's.

LOUIS (*aside*).

Speak to her,
I am not marble, — give her hope — or —

BARADAS.

Madam,
Vex not your King, whose heart, too soft for justice,
Leaves to his ministers that solemn charge.
[LOUIS *walks up the stage.*

JULIE.

You *were* his friend.

BARADAS.

I *was* before I loved thee.

JULIE.

Loved me!

BARADAS.

Hush, Julie: couldst thou misinterpret
My acts, thoughts, motives, nay, my very words,
Here — in this palace?

JULIE.

Alas!
I know not if that mighty spirit now
Stoop to the things of earth. Nay, while I speak,
Perchance he hears the orphan by the throne
Where Kings themselves need pardon; O my liege,
Be father to the fatherless; in you
Dwells my last hope!

Enter BARADAS.

BARADAS (*aside*).

He has not the despatch;
Smiled while we searched, and braves me. — Oh!

LOUIS.

Aha! repentant of her folly! — Well,
Admit her.

BARADAS.

Sire, she comes for Mauprat's pardon,
And the conditions ——

LOUIS.

You are minister —
We leave to you our answer.

[*As Julie enters, the* Captain of the Archers *by another door, and whispers* BARADAS.

CAPTAIN.

The Chevalier
De Mauprat waits below.

BARADAS (*aside*).

Now the despatch!

[*Exit with* Officer.

Enter JULIE.

JULIE.

My liege, you sent for me. I come where Grief
Should come when guiltless, while the name of King
Is holy on the earth! Here, at the feet
Of Power, I kneel for mercy.

LOUIS.

Mercy, Julie,
Is an affair of state. The Cardinal should
In this be your interpreter.

Gaston, for you — the bâton of our armies.
You love me, do you not?

ORLEANS.

Oh, love you, Sire?
(*Aside.*) Never so much as now.

BARADAS.

May I deserve
Your trust (*aside*) until you sign your abdication!
My liege, but one way left to daunt De Mauprat,
And Julie to divorce. — We must prepare
The death-writ; what, though signed and sealed? we can
Withhold the enforcement.

LOUIS.

Ah, you may prepare it;
We need not urge it to effect.

BARADAS.

Exactly!
No haste, my liege. (*Looking at his watch, and aside.*)
He may live one hour longer.

Enter Courtier.

COURTIER.

The Lady Julie, Sire, implores an audience.

But, to make sure, I 've sent our trustiest friend
To see and sift him. — Hist! — here comes the King —
How fare you, Sire?

Enter LOUIS.

LOUIS.

In the same mind. I have
Decided! — Yes, he would forbid your presence,
My brother — yours, my friend, — then Julie, too!
Thwarts — braves — defies — (*suddenly turning to* BARADAS) We make you minister.

Have given our packet to another — 'Sdeath!
I dare not think of it!

ORLEANS.

You 've sent to search him?

BARADAS.

Sent, Sir, to search? — that hireling hands may find
Upon him, naked, with its broken seal,
That scroll, whose every word is death! No — no —
These hands alone must clutch that awful secret.
I dare not leave the palace, night nor day,
While Richelieu lives — his minions — creatures — spies —
Not one must reach the King!

ORLEANS.

What hast thou done?

BARADAS.

Summoned De Mauprat hither.

ORLEANS.

Could this Huguet,
Who prayed thy presence with so fierce a fervour,
Have thieved the scroll?

BARADAS.

Huguet was housed with us,
The very moment we dismissed the courier.
It cannot be! a stale trick for reprieve.

The courtier has it — Huguet, spite his chains,
Grapples! — well done! Now — now! [*Draws back.*
The gallery 's long —
And this is left us!
[*Drawing his dagger, and standing behind the door.*
Re-enter DE BERINGHEN, *with the packet.*
Victory! — Yield it, robber —
Yield it — or die — [*A short struggle.*

DE BERINGHEN.

Off! ho — there! —

FRANÇOIS (*grappling with him*).

Death or honour!
[*Exeunt struggling.*

SCENE II.

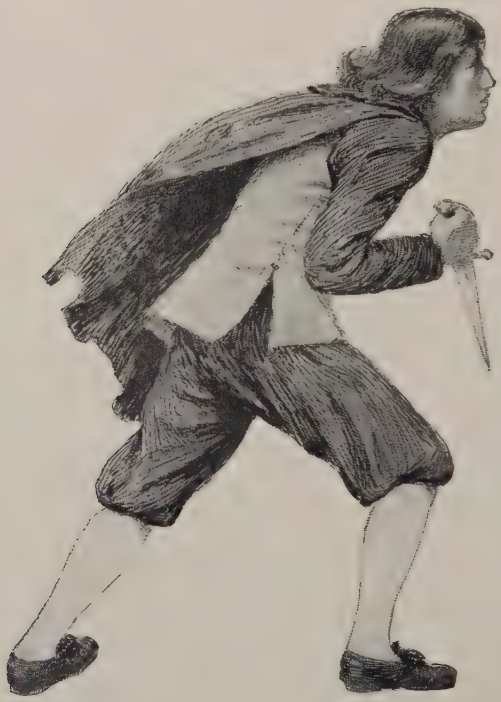
The King's *closet at the Louvre. A suit of rooms in perspective at one side.*

BARADAS *and* ORLEANS.

BARADAS.

All smiles! the Cardinal's swoon of yesterday
Heralds his death to-day. Could he survive,
It would not be as minister — so great
The King's resentment at the priest's defiance!
All smiles! — And yet, should this accursed De
Mauprat

I 've forged a precious one! So far, so well!
Alas! what then? this wretch hath sent to Baradas —



Will sell the scroll to ransom life. O Heaven!
On what a thread hangs hope! [*Listens at the door.*
Loud words — a cry!
[*Looks through the keyhole.*
They struggle! Ho! — the packet!!!
[*Tries to open the door.*
Lost! He has it —

GOVERNOR.

Well, you 're responsible.
Stand there, friend. If, when you come out, my Lord,
The youth slip in, 't is *your* fault.

DE BERINGHEN.

So it is!

[*Exit through the door of the cell, followed by the* Gaoler.

GOVERNOR.

Be calm, my lad. Don't fret so. I had once
A father, too! I 'll not be hard upon you,
And so, stand close. I must not *see* you enter:
You understand! Between this innocent youth
And that intriguing monk there is, in truth,
A wide distinction.

Re-enter Gaoler.

Come, we 'll go our rounds;
I 'll give you just one quarter of an hour;
And if my Lord leave first, make my excuse.
Yet stay, the gallery 's long and dark: no sentry
Until he reach the grate below. He 'd best
Wait till I come. If he should lose the way,
We may not be in call.

FRANÇOIS.

I 'll tell him, Sir.

[*Exeunt* Governor *and* Gaoler.

He 's a wise son that knoweth his own father.

The Count can't leave his Majesty an instant:
I am his proxy.

GOVERNOR.

The Count's word is law!
Again, young scapegrace! How com'st thou admitted?

DE BERINGHEN.

Oh! a most filial fellow: Huguet's son!
I found him whimpering in the court below.
I pray his leave to say good-bye to father,
Before that very long, unpleasant journey,
Father 's about to take. Let him wait here
Till I return.

FRANÇOIS.

No; take me with you.

DE BERINGHEN.

Nay;
After *me*, friend — the Public first!

GOVERNOR.

The Count's
Commands are strict. No one must visit Huguet
Without his passport.

DE BERINGHEN.

Here it is! Pshaw! nonsense!
I 'll be your surety. See, my Cerberus,
He is no Hercules!

GOVERNOR.

Oh, fear not:
The Count's commands by him who came for Mauprat
Are to prepare headsman and axe by noon;
The Count will give you perquisites enough —
Two deaths in one day!

GAOLER.

Sir, may Heaven reward him!
Oh, by the way, that troublesome young fellow,
Who calls himself the prisoner Huguet's son,
Is here again — implores, weeps, raves to see him.

GOVERNOR.

Poor youth, I pity him!

Enter DE BERINGHEN, *followed by* FRANÇOIS.

DE BERINGHEN (*to* FRANÇOIS).

Now, prithee, friend,
Let go my cloak; you really discompose me.

FRANÇOIS.

No, they will drive me hence: my father! Oh!
Let me but see him once — but once — one moment!

DE BERINGHEN (*to* Governor).

Your servant, Messire; this poor rascal, Huguet,
Has sent to see the Count de Baradas
Upon state secrets, that afflict his conscience.

JOSEPH.

What can be done? — Distraction! Richelieu yet!
Must — what? — I know not! — Thought, nerve, strength, forsake me.

Dare you refuse the Church her holiest rights?

GOVERNOR.

I refuse nothing — I obey my orders.

JOSEPH.

And sell your country to her parricides!
Oh, tremble yet! — Richelieu ——

GOVERNOR.

Begone!

JOSEPH.

Undone!

[*Exit* JOSEPH.

GOVERNOR.

A most audacious shaveling — interdicted
Above all others by the Count.

GAOLER.

I hope, Sir,
I shall not lose my perquisites. The Sieur
De Mauprat will not be reprieved?

JOSEPH.

By those gray hairs —
Yea, by this badge (*touching the cross of St. Louis worn by the* Governor) —
The guerdon of your valour —
By all your toils — hard days and sleepless nights —
Borne in your country's service, noble son —
Let me but see the prisoner!

GOVERNOR.

No!

JOSEPH.

He hath
Secrets of state — papers in which ——

GOVERNOR (*interrupting*).

I know —
Such was his message to Count Baradas:
Doubtless the Count will see to it!

JOSEPH.

The Count!
Then not a hope! — You shall ——

GOVERNOR.

Betray my trust!
Never — not one word more. — You heard me, gaoler!

To either prisoner, Huguet or De Mauprat,
Not even a priest, without the special passport
Of Count de Baradas. I 'll hear no more!

JOSEPH.

Just Heaven! and are we baffled thus? Despair!!
Think on the Cardinal's power — beware his anger.

GOVERNOR.

I 'll not be menaced, priest! Besides, the Cardinal
Is dying and disgraced — all Paris knows it.
You hear the prisoner's knell!

[*Bell tolls.*

JOSEPH.

I do beseech you —
The Cardinal is *not* dying. But one moment,
And — hist! — five thousand pistoles! —

GOVERNOR.

How! a bribe —
And to a soldier, gray with years of honour!
Begone! —

JOSEPH.

Ten thousand — twenty! —

GOVERNOR.

Gaoler! put
This monk without our walls.

GOVERNOR.

You cannot enter, monk! Such are my orders!

JOSEPH.

Orders, vain man! — the Cardinal still is Minister.
His orders crush all others!

GOVERNOR (*lifting his hat*).

Save his King's!

See, monk, the royal sign and seal affixed
To the Count's mandate. None may have access

Trembles 'tween life and death. His life is power;
Smite one — slay both! No Æsculapian drugs,
By learned quacks baptised with Latin jargon,
E'er bore the healing which that scrap of parchment
Will medicine to Ambition's flagging heart.
France shall be saved — and Joseph be a bishop.

Enter Governor *and* JOSEPH.

GOVERNOR.

Father, you wish to see the prisoners Huguet
And the young knight De Mauprat?

JOSEPH.

So my office,
And the Lord Cardinal's order, warrant, son!

GOVERNOR.

Father, it cannot be: Count Baradas
Has summoned to the Louvre Sieur de Mauprat.

JOSEPH.

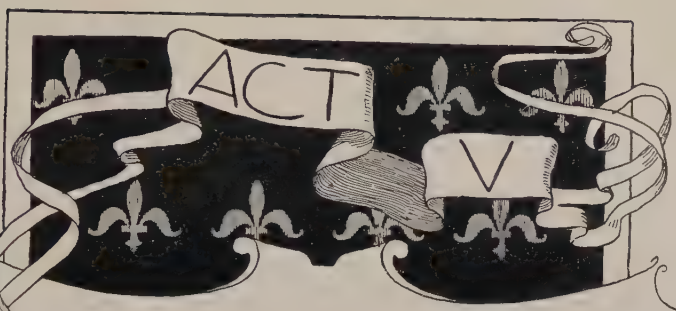
Well, well! But Huguet —

GOVERNOR.

Dies at noon.

JOSEPH.

At noon!
No moment to delay the pious rites
Which fit the soul for death. Quick — quick — admit me!



FOURTH DAY.

Scene I.

The Bastile — a corridor; in the background the door of one of the condemned cells.

Enter Joseph *and* Gaoler.

GAOLER.

Stay, father, I will call the governor.

[*Exit* Gaoler.

JOSEPH.

He has it then — this Huguet; — so we learn
From François. — Humph! Now if I can but gain
One moment's access, all is ours! The Cardinal

BARADAS (*aside*).

His mind
And life are breaking fast!

RICHELIEU (*overhearing him*).

Irreverent ribald!
If so, beware the falling ruins! Hark!
I tell thee, scorner of these whitening hairs,
When this snow melteth there shall come a flood!
Avaunt! my name is Richelieu — I defy thee!
Walk blindfold on; behind thee stalks the headsman.
Ha! ha! — how pale he is! Heaven save my country!

[*Falls back in* JOSEPH'S *arms.*

[BARADAS *exit, followed by* DE BERINGHEN, *betraying his exultation by his gestures.*

JOSEPH (*aside*).

Patience is your game:
Reflect, you have not the Despatch!

RICHELIEU.

O monk!
Leave patience to the saints — for *I* am human!
Did not thy father die for France, poor orphan?
And now they say thou hast *no* father! — Fie!
Art thou not pure and good? — if so, thou art
A part of that — the Beautiful, the Sacred —
Which, in all climes, men that have hearts adore,
By the great title of their mother country!

BARADAS (*aside*).

He wanders!

RICHELIEU.

So cling close unto my breast,
Here where thou droop'st lies France! I am very feeble —
Of little use it seems to either now.
Well, well — we will go home.

BARADAS.

In sooth, my Lord,
You do need rest — the burdens of the State
O'ertask your health!

RICHELIEU (*to* JOSEPH).

I 'm patient, see!

RICHELIEU.

Ay, is it so? —
Then wakes the power which in the age of iron
Burst forth to curb the great, and raise the low.
Mark, where she stands! — around her form I draw
The awful circle of our solemn Church!
Set but a foot within that holy ground,
And on thy head — yea, though it wore a crown —
I launch the curse of Rome!

BARADAS.

I dare not brave you!
I do but speak the orders of my King.
The Church, your rank, power, very word, my Lord,
Suffice you for resistance: — blame yourself,
If it should cost you power!

RICHELIEU.

That *my* stake. — Ah!
Dark gamester! *what is thine?* Look to it well! —
Lose not a trick. — By this same hour to-morrow
Thou shalt have France, or I thy head!

BARADAS (*aside to* DE BERINGHEN).

He cannot
Have the Despatch?

DE BERINGHEN.

No: were it so, your stake
Were lost already.

RICHELIEU.

Ay — and close
Upon my corpse! — I am not made to live —
Friends, glory, France, all reft from me; — my star
Like some vain holiday mimicry of fire,
Piercing imperial heaven, and falling down,
Rayless and blackened, to the dust — a thing
For all men's feet to trample! Yea! — to-morrow
Triumph or death! Look up, child! — Lead us, Joseph.

[*As they are going out, enter* BARADAS *and* DE BERINGHEN.

BARADAS.

My Lord, the King cannot believe your Eminence
So far forgets your duty, and his greatness,
As to resist his mandate! Pray you, Madam,
Obey the King — no cause for fear!

JULIE.

My father!

RICHELIEU

She shall not stir!

BARADAS.

You are not of her kindred —
An orphan —

RICHELIEU.

And her country is her mother!

BARADAS.

The country is the King!

FIRST COURTIER.

My Lord, I am your friend and servant —
Misjudge me not; but never yet was Louis
So roused against you: — shall I take this answer? —
It were to be your foe.

RICHELIEU.

All time my foe,
If I, a Priest, could cast this holy Sorrow
Forth from her last asylum!

FIRST COURTIER.

He is lost!

[*Exit* First Courtier.

RICHELIEU.

God help thee, child! — she hears not! Look upon her!
The storm, that rends the oak, uproots the flower.
Her father loved me so! and in that age
When friends are brothers! She has been to me
Soother, nurse, plaything, daughter. Are these tears?
O shame, shame! — dotage!

JOSEPH.

Tears are not for eyes
That rather need the lightning, which can pierce
Through barred gates and triple walls, to smite
Crime, where it cowers in secret! — The Despatch!
Set every spy to work; — the morrow's sun
Must see that written treason in your hands,
Or rise upon your ruin.

Would carry earthquake to remotest lands,
And change the Christian globe. What wouldst thou, woman?
Thy fate and his, with mine, for good or ill,
Are woven threads. In my vast sum of life
Millions such units merge.]

Enter First Courtier.

FIRST COURTIER.

Madame de Mauprat!
Pardon, your Eminence — even now I seek
This lady's home — commanded by the King
To pray her presence.

JULIE (*clinging to* RICHELIEU).

Think of my dead father! —
Think how, an infant, clinging to your knees,
And looking to your eyes, the wrinkled care
Fled from your brow before the smile of childhood,
Fresh from the dews of heaven! Think of this,
And take me to your breast.

RICHELIEU.

To those who sent you! —
And say you found the virtue they would slay
Here — couched upon this heart, as at an altar,
And sheltered by the wings of sacred Rome!
Begone!

JULIE.

O mercy! mercy!
Save him, restore him, father! Art thou not
The Cardinal-King? — the Lord of life and death —
Beneath whose light, as deeps beneath the moon,
The solemn tides of Empire ebb and flow? —
Art thou not Richelieu?

RICHELIEU.

Yesterday I was! —
To-day, a very weak old man! — To-morrow,
I know not what!

JULIE.

Do you conceive his meaning?
Alas! I cannot. But, methinks, my senses
Are duller than they were!

JOSEPH.

The King is chafed
Against his servant. Lady, while we speak,
The lackey of the anteroom is not
More powerless than the Minister of France

[RICHELIEU.

And yet the air is still; Heaven wears no cloud;
From Nature's silent orbit starts no portent
To warn the unconscious world; — albeit this night
May with a morrow teem which, in my fall,

RICHELIEU.

You are Richelieu's ward,
A soldier's bride: they who insist on truth
Must outface fear; — you ask me for your husband?
There — where the clouds of heaven look darkest, o'er
The domes of the Bastile!

JULIE.

I thank you, father;
You see I do not shudder. Heaven forgive you
The sin of this desertion!

RICHELIEU (*detaining her*).

Whither wouldst thou?

JULIE.

Stay me not. Fie! I should be there already.
I am thy ward, and haply he may think
Thou 'st taught *me* also to forsake the wretched!

RICHELIEU.

I 've filled those cells — with many — traitors all.
Had *they* wives too? — Thy memories, Power, are solemn!
Poor sufferer! — think'st thou that yon gates of woe
Unbar to love? Alas! if love once enter,
'T is for the last farewell; between those walls
And the mute grave — the blessed household sounds
Only heard once — while, hungering at the door,
The headsman whets the axe.

But choked by pity. It *was* truth — all truth!
Seized — the Bastile — and in your presence, too!
Cardinal, where is Adrien? — Think — he saved
Your life: — your name is infamy, if wrong
Should come to his!

RICHELIEU.

Be soothed, child.

JULIE.

Child no more;
I love, and I am woman! Hope and suffer —
Love, suffering, hope, — what else doth make the strength
And majesty of woman? — Where is Adrien?

RICHELIEU (*to* JOSEPH).

Your youth was never young — you never loved: —
Speak to her —

JOSEPH.

Nay, take heed — the King's command,
'T is true — I mean — the —

JULIE (*to* RICHELIEU).

Let thine eyes meet mine;
Answer me but one word — I am a wife —
I ask thee for my *home* — my FATE — my ALL!
Where is my *husband?*

RICHELIEU.

Away to Marion!

JOSEPH.

I have been there — she is seized — removed — imprisoned —
By the Count's orders.

RICHELIEU.

Goddess of bright dreams,
My country — shalt thou lose me now, when most
Thou need'st thy worshipper? My native land!
Let me but ward this dagger from thy heart,
And die — but on thy bosom?

Enter JULIE.

JULIE.

Heaven! I thank thee!
It cannot be, or this all-powerful man
Would not stand idly thus.

RICHELIEU.

What dost *thou* here?
Home!

JULIE.

Home! — is *Adrien there?* — you're dumb — yet strive
For words; I see them trembling on your lip,

SCENE II.

RICHELIEU.

Joseph — Did you hear the King?

JOSEPH.

I did — there 's danger! Had you been less haughty ——

RICHELIEU.

And suffered slaves to chuckle — "See the Cardinal —
How meek his Eminence is to-day!" — I tell thee
This is a strife in which the loftiest look
Is the most subtle armour ——

JOSEPH.

But ——

RICHELIEU.

No time
For ifs and buts. I will accuse these traitors!
François shall witness that De Baradas
Gave him the secret message for De Bouillon,
And told him life and death were in the scroll.
I will — I will —

JOSEPH.

Tush! François is your creature;
So they will say, and laugh at you! — *your witness*
Must be that same Despatch.

LOUIS.

No: — when we see your Eminence in truth
At the *foot* of the throne — we 'll listen to you.

[*Exit* LOUIS.

ORLEANS.

Saved!

BARADAS.

For this, deep thanks to Julie and to Mauprat!

RICHELIEU.

My Lord de Baradas — I pray your pardon —
You are to be my successor! — your hand, Sir!

BARADAS (*aside*).

What can this mean? —

RICHELIEU.

It trembles, see! it trembles!
The hand that holds the destinies of nations
Ought to shake less! — poor Baradas — poor France!

BARADAS.

Insolent ——

[*Exeunt* BARADAS *and* ORLEANS.

The humblest craftsman — the obscurest vassal —
The very leper shrinking from the sun,
Though loathed by Charity might ask for justice! —
Not with the fawning tone and crawling mien
Of some I see around you — Counts and Princes —
Kneeling for *favours;* — but, erect and loud,
As men who ask man's rights! — my liege, my Louis,
Do you refuse me justice — audience even —
In the pale presence of the baffled Murder?

LOUIS.

Lord Cardinal — one by one you have severed from me
The bonds of human love. All near and dear
Marked out for vengeance — exile or the scaffold.
You find me now amidst my trustiest friends,
My closest kindred; — you would tear them from me;
They murder *you* forsooth, since *me* they love!
Enough of plots and treasons for one reign!
Home! — home! and sleep away these phantoms!

RICHELIEU.

Sire!
I —— patience, Heaven! — sweet Heaven! — Sire, from the foot
Of that Great Throne, these hands have raised aloft
On an Olympus, looking down on mortals
And worshipped by their awe — before the foot
Of that high throne, — spurn you the gray-haired man
Who gave you empire — and now sues for safety?

No foe not humbled! — Look within; the Arts
Quit for your schools their old Hesperides,
The golden Italy! while through the veins
Of your vast empire flows in strengthening tides
TRADE, the calm health of nations!
Sire, I know
Your smoother courtiers please you best — nor measure
Myself with them, — yet sometimes I would doubt
If Statesmen rocked and dandled into power
Could leave such legacies to kings!
[LOUIS *appears irresolute.*

BARADAS (*passing him, whispers*).
But Julie,
Shall I not summon her to court?]

LOUIS (*motions to* BARADAS *and turns haughtily to the* CARDINAL).
Enough!
Your Eminence must excuse a longer audience.
To your own palace: — For our conference, this
Nor place — nor season.

RICHELIEU.
Good my liege, for *Justice*
All place a temple, and all season, summer! —
Do you deny me justice? — Saints of Heaven!
He turns from me! — *Do you deny me justice?*
For fifteen years, while in these hands dwelt Empire,

RICHELIEU.

Rivals, Sire, in what?
Service to France? *I have none!* Lives the man
Whom Europe, paled before your glory, deems
Rival to Armand Richelieu?

LOUIS.

What, so haughty!
Remember, he who made can unmake.

RICHELIEU.

Never!
Never! Your anger can recall your trust,
Annul my office, spoil me of my lands,
Rifle my coffers, — but my name — my deeds,
Are royal in a land beyond your sceptre!
Pass sentence on me, if you will; from Kings,
Lo! I appeal to time! [Be just, my liege —
I found your kingdom rent with heresies
And bristling with rebellion; lawless nobles
And breadless serfs; England fomenting discord;
Austria — her clutch on your dominion; Spain
Forging the prodigal gold of either Ind
To armèd thunderbolts. The Arts lay dead,
Trade rotted in your marts, your Armies mutinous,
Your Treasury bankrupt. Would you now revoke
Your trust, so be it! and I leave you, sole
Supremest Monarch of the mightiest realm,
From Ganges to the Icebergs: — Look without;

LOUIS.

What means this false report of death, Lord Cardinal?

RICHELIEU.

Are you then angered, Sire, that I live still?

LOUIS.

No; but such artifice —

RICHELIEU.

Not mine: — look elsewhere!
Louis — my castle swarmed with the assassins.

BARADAS (*advancing*).

We have punished them already. Huguet now
In the Bastile. — Oh! my Lord, *we* were prompt
To avenge you — *we* were —

RICHELIEU.

WE? — ha! ha! you hear,
My liege! What page, man, in the last court grammar
Made you a plural? Count, you have seized the *hireling:* —
Sire, shall I name the *master?*

LOUIS.

Tush! my Lord,
The old contrivance: — ever does your wit
Invent assassins, — that ambition may
Slay rivals —

RICHELIEU.

Speak not, but go: — I would not see young Valour
So humbled as gray Service.

DE MAUPRAT.

Fare you well.
Save Julie, and console her.

FRANÇOIS (*aside to* MAUPRAT).

The despatch!
Your fate, foes, life, hang on a word! — to whom?

DE MAUPRAT.

To Huguet.

FRANÇOIS.

Hush — keep counsel! — silence — hope!
[*Exeunt* MAUPRAT *and* Guard.

BARADAS (*aside to* FRANÇOIS).

Has he the packet?

FRANÇOIS.

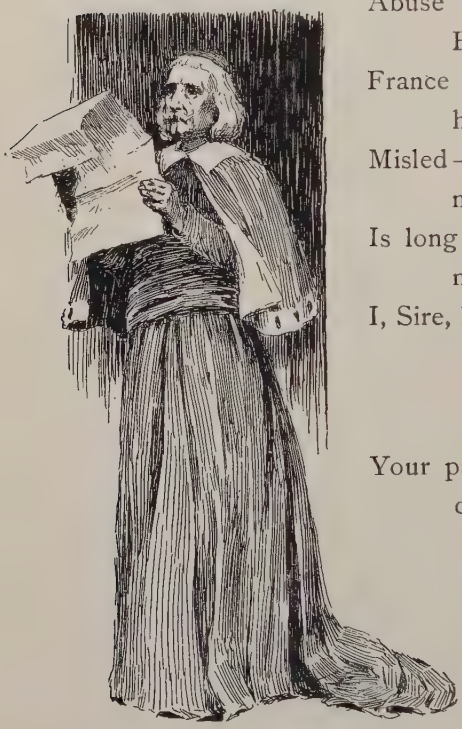
He will not reveal —
(*Aside.*) Work, brain! — beat, heart! — "*There's no such word as fail!*"
[*Exit* FRANÇOIS.

RICHELIEU (*fiercely*).

Room, my Lords, room! — the Minister of France
Can need no intercession with the King.
[*They fall back.*

RICHELIEU.

High treason — Faviaux! still that stale pretence!
My liege, bad men (ay, Count, most *knavish* men!)



Abuse your royal goodness. — For this soldier,
France hath none braver — and his youth's hot folly,
Misled — (by whom *your Highness* may conjecture!) —
Is long since cancelled by a loyal manhood. —
I, Sire, have pardoned him.

LOUIS.

And we do give
Your pardon to the winds. — Sir, do your duty!

RICHELIEU.

What, Sire? — you do not know — Oh, pardon me —
You know not yet, that this brave, honest heart
Stood between mine and murder! — Sire! for my sake —
For your old servant's sake — undo this wrong.
See, let me rend the sentence.

LOUIS.

At your peril!
This is too much: — Again, Sir, do your duty!

BARADAS.

The Dead
Returned to life!

LOUIS.

What! a *mock* death! this tops
The Infinite of Insult.

DE MAUPRAT (*breaking from the* Guards).

Priest and Hero! —
For you are both — protect the truth! —

RICHELIEU (*taking the writ from the* Guard).

What 's this?

DE BERINGHEN.

Fact in philosophy. Foxes have got
Nine lives, as well as cats! —

BARADAS.

Be firm, my liege.

LOUIS.

I have assumed the sceptre — I will wield it!

JOSEPH.

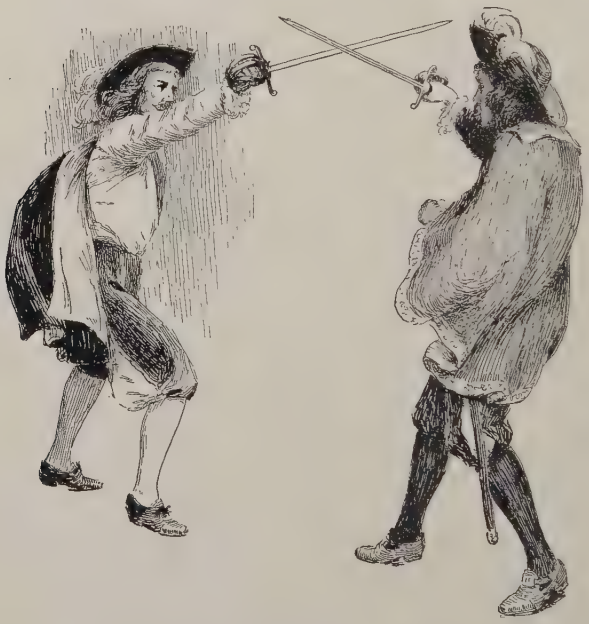
The tide runs counter — there 'll be shipwreck somewhere.

[BARADAS *and* ORLEANS *keep close to the* KING, *whispering and prompting him when* RICHELIEU *speaks.*

LOUIS.

Dare he thus brave us?

[BARADAS *goes to the* Guard, *and gives the writ.*



DE MAUPRAT.

Sire, in the Cardinal's name —

BARADAS.

Seize him — disarm — to the Bastile!

[DE MAUPRAT, *seized, struggles with the* Guard — FRANÇOIS *restlessly endeavouring to pacify and speak to him — when the gates open. Enter* RICHELIEU — JOSEPH — *followed by* Arquebusiers.

Enter BARADAS.

Stand back!
Now, villain! now — I have thee!
(*To* FRANÇOIS.) — Hence, Sir! — *Draw!*

FRANÇOIS.

Art mad? — the King 's at hand! leave *him* to Richelieu!
Speak — the despatch — to whom —

DE MAUPRAT (*dashing him aside, and rushing to* BARADAS).

Thou triple slanderer!
I 'll set my heel upon thy crest!
[*A few passes.*

FRANÇOIS.

Fly — fly! —
The King! —

Enter at one side LOUIS, ORLEANS, DE BERINGHEN, Courtiers, *&c.; at the other, the* Guards *hastily.*

LOUIS.

Swords drawn — before our very palace! —
Have our laws died with Richelieu?

BARADAS.

Pardon, Sire, —
My crime but self-defence. (*Aside to* KING.) It is De Mauprat!

DE MAUPRAT.

Well! What wouldst thou?

FRANÇOIS.

The despatch!
The packet. — LOOK ON ME — I serve the Cardinal;
You know me. — Did you not keep guard last night
By Marion's house?

DE MAUPRAT.

I did; — no matter now! —
They told me, *he* was *here!* —

FRANÇOIS.

O joy! quick — quick —
The packet thou didst wrest from me?

DE MAUPRAT.

The packet? —
What, art thou he I deemed the Cardinal's spy
(Dupe that I was) — and overhearing Marion —

FRANÇOIS.

The same — restore it! — haste!

DE MAUPRAT.

I have it not: —
Methought it but revealed our scheme to Richelieu,
And, as we mounted, gave it to ——

Enter FRANÇOIS.

FRANÇOIS.

All search, as yet, in vain for Mauprat! — Not
At home since yesternoon — a soldier told me
He saw him pass this way with hasty strides;
Should he meet Baradas — they 'd rend it from him —
And then — benignant Fortune, smile upon me —
I am thy son! — if thou desert'st me now,
Come, Death, and snatch me from disgrace. But, no,
There 's a great Spirit ever in the air
That from prolific and far-spreading wings
Scatters the seeds of honour — yea, the walls
And moats of castled forts — the barren seas —
The cell wherein the pale-eyed student holds
Talk with melodious science — all are sown
With everlasting honours, if our souls
Will toil for fame as boors for bread —

Enter MAUPRAT.

DE MAUPRAT.

Oh, let me —
Let me but meet him foot to foot — I 'll dig
The Judas from his heart; — albeit the King
Should o'er him cast the purple!

FRANÇOIS.

Mauprat! hold: —
Where is the ——

And do abhor the bold and frontless vices
Which the Church justly censures; yet, 't is sad
On rainy days to drag out weary hours —
Deaf to the music of a woman's voice —
Blind to the sunshine of a woman's eyes.
It is no sin in Kings to seek amusement;
And that is all I seek. I miss her much —
She has a silver laugh — a rare perfection.

BARADAS.

Richelieu was most disloyal in that marriage.]

LOUIS (*querulously*).

He knew that Julie pleased me: — a clear proof
He never loved me!

BARADAS.

Oh, most clear! — But now
No bar between the lady and your will!
This writ makes all secure: a week or two
In the Bastile will sober Mauprat's love,
And leave him eager to dissolve a hymen
That brings him such a home.

LOUIS.

See to it, Count.

[*Exit* BARADAS.

I 'll summon Julie back. A word with you.

[*Takes aside* First Courtier *and* DE BERINGHEN, *and passes, conversing with them, through the Gardens.*

LOUIS.

Ahem! — He was too stern.

ORLEANS.

A very Nero.

BARADAS.

His power was like the Capitol of old —
Built on a human skull.

LOUIS.

And, had he lived,
I know another head, my Baradas,
That would have propped the pile: I 've seen him eye thee
With a most hungry fancy.

BARADAS (*anxiously*).

Sire, I knew
You would protect me.

LOUIS.

Did you so? of course!
And yet he had a way with him — a something
That always —— But no matter — he is dead.
And, after all, men called his King "The Just,"
And so I am. Dear Count, this silliest Julie,
I know not why, she takes my fancy. Many
As fair, and certainly more kind; but yet
It is so. Count, I am no lustful Tarquin,

BARADAS.

Sorrow? — No, sire!

LOUIS.

Bah! for *hunting*, man,
And Richelieu 's dead; 't would be an indecorum
Till he is buried — (*yawns*) — life is very tedious.
I made a madrigal on life last week:
You do not sing, Count? — Pity; you should learn.
Poor Richelieu had no ear — yet a great man.
Ah! what a weary weight devolves upon me!
These endless wars — these thankless Parliaments —
The snares in which he tangled States and Kings,
Like the old fisher of the fable, Proteus,
Netting great Neptune's wariest tribes, and changing
Into all shapes when Craft pursued himself:
Oh, a great man!

BARADAS.

Your royal mother said so,
And died in exile.

LOUIS (*sadly*).

True: I loved my mother.

BARADAS.

The Cardinal dies. — Yet day revives the earth;
The rivers run not back. In truth, my liege,
Did your high orb on others shine as him,
Why, things as dull in their own selves as I am
Would glow as brightly with the borrowed beam.

BARADAS.

Yourself, my liege. That swart and potent star
Eclipsed your royal orb. He served the country,
But did he *serve*, or seek to *sway* the *King?*

[LOUIS.

You 're right — he was an able politician —
That 's all: — between ourselves, Count, I suspect
The largeness of his learning — specially
In falcons — a poor huntsman, too!

BARADAS.

Ha — ha!
Your Majesty remembers —

LOUIS.

Ay, the blunder
Between the *greffier* and the *souillard* when —
[*Checks and crosses himself.*
Alas! poor sinners that we are! we laugh
While this great man — a priest, a cardinal,
A faithful servant — out upon us! —

BARADAS.

Sire,
If my brow wear no cloud, 't is that the Cardinal
No longer shades the King.

LOUIS (*looking up at the skies*).

Oh, Baradas!
Am I not to be pitied? — what a day
For —

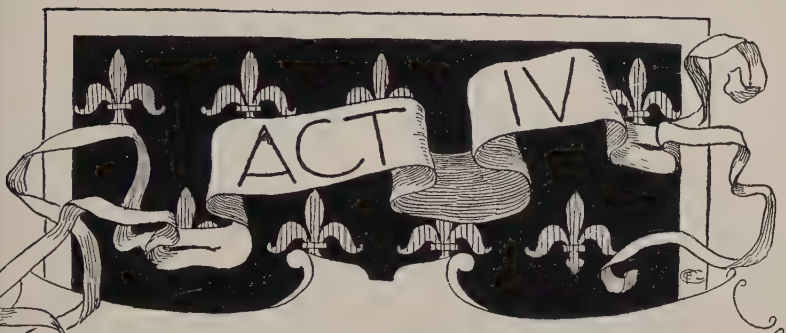
Enter LOUIS *and other* Courtiers. (*They uncover.*)

ORLEANS.

Now, my liege, now, I can embrace a brother.

LOUIS.

Dear Gaston, yes. — I do believe you *love* me; —
Richelieu denied it — severed us too long.
A great man, Gaston! Who shall govern France?



THIRD DAY.

Scene I.

The Gardens of the Louvre. — Orleans, Baradas, De Beringhen, Courtiers, *&c.*

ORLEANS.

How does my brother bear the Cardinal's death?

BARADAS.

With grief, when thinking of the toils of State;
With joy, when thinking of the eyes of Julie: —
At times he sighs, "Who now shall govern France?"
Anon exclaims, "Who now shall baffle Louis?"

I hold De Mauprat in my grasp. To-morrow,
And France is ours! Thou dark and fallen Angel,
Whose name on earth 's AMBITION — thou that mak'st
Thy throne on treasons, stratagems, and murder —
And with thy fierce and blood-red smile canst quench
The guiding stars of solemn empire — hear us —
(For we are thine) — and light us to the goal!

FRANÇOIS.

Ha, De Mauprat!
The night was dark — his visor closed.

BARADAS.

'T was he!
How could he guess? — 'sdeath! if he should betray us.
His hate to Richelieu dies with Richelieu — and
He was not great enough for treason. — Hence!
Find Mauprat — beg, steal, filch, or force it back,
Or, as I live, the halter ——

FRANÇOIS.

By the morrow
I will regain it, (*aside*) and redeem my honour!
[*Exit* FRANÇOIS.

ORLEANS.

Oh, we are lost —

BARADAS.

Not so! But cause on cause
For Mauprat's seizure — silence — death! Take courage.

ORLEANS.

Should it once reach the King, the Cardinal's arm
Could smite us from the grave.

BARADAS.

Sir, think it not!

BARADAS.

One of the conspirators:
Mauprat himself, perhaps.

Enter FRANÇOIS.

FRANÇOIS.

My Lord ——

BARADAS.

Ha, traitor!
In Paris still?

FRANÇOIS.

The packet — the despatch —
Some knave played spy without, and reft it from me,
Ere I could draw my sword.

BARADAS.

Played spy *without!*
Did he wear armour?

FRANÇOIS.

Ay, from head to heel.

ORLEANS.

One of our band. Oh, heavens!

BARADAS.

Could it be Mauprat?
Kept guard at the *door* — knew *naught of the despatch* —
How HE? — and yet, who other?

DE BERINGHEN.

My Lords,
Since our suspense is ended — you 'll excuse me;
'T is late — and, *entre nous*, I have not supped yet!
I 'm one of the new Council now, remember;
I feel the public stirring here already;
A very craving monster. *Au revoir!*

[*Exit* DE BERINGHEN.

ORLEANS.

No fear, now Richelieu 's dead.

BARADAS.

And could he come
To life again, he could not keep life's life —
His power — nor save De Mauprat from the scaffold —
Nor Julie from these arms — nor Paris from
The Spaniard — nor your Highness from the throne!
All ours! all ours! in spite of my Lord Cardinal!

Enter Page.

PAGE.

A gentleman, my Lord, of better mien
Than he who last ——

BARADAS.

Well, he may enter.

[*Exit* PAGE.

ORLEANS.

Who
Can this be?

BARADAS.

Strangled? — monstrous villain!
Reward for murder! Ho, there! [*Stamping.*

Enter Captain *with five* Archers.

HUGUET.

No, thou durst not!

BARADAS.

Seize on the ruffian — bind him — gag him! Off
To the Bastile!

HUGUET.

Your word — your plighted faith!

BARADAS.

Insolent liar! — ho, away!

HUGUET.

Nay, Count;
I have that about me, which ——

BARADAS.

Away with him!
[*Exeunt* HUGUET *and* Archers.
Now, then, all 's safe; Huguet must die in prison,
So Mauprat: — coax or force the meaner crew
To fly the country. Ha, ha! thus, your Highness,
Great men make use of little men.

BARADAS (*apologetically*).

Forgive me, but ——

Enter Page.

PAGE.

My Lord, a rude, strange soldier,
Breathless with haste, demands an audience.

BARADAS.

So! —
The archers?

PAGE.

In the anteroom, my Lord,
As you desired.

BARADAS.

'T is well — admit the soldier. [*Exit* Page.
Huguet! — I bade him seek me here.

Enter HUGUET.

HUGUET.

My Lords,
The deed is done. Now, Count, fulfil your word,
And make me noble!

BARADAS.

Richelieu dead? — art sure?
How died he?

HUGUET.

Strangled in his sleep: — no blood,
No telltale violence.

BARADAS.

The King, at Julie's flight
Enraged, will brook no rival in a subject —
So on this old offence — the affair of Faviaux —
Ere Mauprat can tell tales of *us*, we build
His bridge between the dungeon and the grave.

ORLEANS.

Well; if our courier can but reach the army,
The cards are ours! — and yet, I own, I tremble.
Our names are in the scroll — discovery, death!

BARADAS.

Success, a crown!

DE BERINGHEN (*apart to* BARADAS).

Our future Regent is
No hero.

BARADAS (*to* DE BERINGHEN).

But his rank makes others valiant;
And on his cowardice I mount to power.
Were Orleans Regent — what were Baradas?
Oh! by the way — I had forgot, your Highness,
Friend Huguet whispered me, "Beware of Marion:
I've seen her lurking near the Cardinal's palace."
Upon that hint, I've found her lodgings elsewhere.

ORLEANS.

You wrong her, Count. Poor Marion! — she adores me.

Whom the poor Cardinal fancies his protectors.
Save us from such protection!

ORLEANS.

Yet, if Huguet,
By whose advice and proffers we renounced
Our earlier scheme, should still be Richelieu's minion,
And play us false —

DE BERINGHEN.

The fox must then devour
The geese he gripes, (I 'm out of it, thank Heaven!)
And you must swear you smelt the trick, but seemed
To approve the deed – to render up the doers.

Enter BARADAS.

BARADAS.

Julie is fled: — the King, whom now I left
To a most thorny pillow, vows revenge
On her — on Mauprat — and on Richelieu! Well;
We loyal men anticipate his wish
Upon the last — and as for Mauprat —
[*Showing a writ.*

DE BERINGHEN.

Hum!
They say the Devil invented printing! Faith,
He has some hand in writing parchment — eh, Count?
What mischief now?

HUGUET.

And you?

DE MAUPRAT.

Will stay, to crush
Eager suspicion — to forbid sharp eyes
To dwell too closely on the clay; prepare
The rites, and place him on his bier — this *my* task.
I leave to you, sirs, the more grateful lot
Of wealth and honours. Hence!

HUGUET.

I shall be noble!

DE MAUPRAT.

Away!

FIRST CONSPIRATOR.

Five thousand crowns!

OMNES.

To horse! — to horse!

[*Exeunt* Conspirators.

SCENE IV.

Still night. — A room in the house of COUNT DE BARADAS, *lighted, &c.*

ORLEANS *and* DE BERINGHEN.

DE BERINGHEN.

I understand. Mauprat kept guard without:
Knows naught of the despatch — but heads the troop

DE MAUPRAT.

I watched him till he slept.
Heed me. — No trace of blood reveals the deed; —
Strangled in sleep. His health hath long been broken —

Found breathless in his bed. So runs our tale,
Remember! Back to Paris — Orleans gives
Ten thousand crowns, and Baradas a lordship,
To him who first gluts vengeance with the news
That Richelieu is in heaven! Quick, that all France
May share your joy!

SCENE III.

Enter HUGUET *and the* Conspirators.

HUGUET.

De Mauprat's hand is never slow in battle; —
Strange, if it falter now! Ha! gone!

FIRST CONSPIRATOR.

Perchance
The fox had crept to rest; and to his lair
Death, the dark hunter, tracks him.

[*Enter* MAUPRAT, *throwing open the doors of the recess, in which a bed, whereon* RICHELIEU *lies extended.*

DE MAUPRAT.

Live the King!
Richelieu is dead!

HUGUET (*advancing towards the recess;* MAUPRAT *following, his hand on his dagger*).

Are his eyes open?

DE MAUPRAT.

Ay,
As if in life!

HUGUET (*turning back*).

I will not look on him.
You have been long.

RICHELIEU.

Bloodhounds, I laugh at ye! — ha! ha! — we will
Baffle them yet. — Ha! ha!

[*Exeunt* JULIE, MAUPRAT, RICHELIEU.

HUGUET (*without*).

This way — this way!

That I can trust you now (*slowly, and gazing on him*):
— yes; I can trust you.
How many of my troop league with you?

DE MAUPRAT.

All! —
We *are* your troop!

RICHELIEU.

And Huguet?

DE MAUPRAT.

Is our captain.

RICHELIEU.

A retributive Power! — This comes of spies!
All? then the lion's skin 's too short to-night, —
Now for the fox's! —

JULIE.

A hoarse, gathering murmur! —
Hurrying and heavy footsteps!

RICHELIEU.

Ha! — the posterns?

DE MAUPRAT.

No egress where no sentry!

RICHELIEU.

Follow me —
I have it! — to my chamber — quick! Come, Julie!
Hush! Mauprat, come!
(*Murmur at a distance*) — Death to the Cardinal!

The Centaur's poisonous robe — hopes even now
To make thy corpse his footstool to thy bed!
Where was thy wit, man? — Ho! these schemes are glass!
The very sun shines through them.

DE MAUPRAT.

Oh, my Lord,
Can you forgive me?

RICHELIEU.

Ay, and save you!

DE MAUPRAT.

Save! —
Terrible word! — Oh, save *thyself*: — these halls
Swarm with thy foes: already for thy blood
Pants thirsty Murder!

JULIE.

Murder?

RICHELIEU.

Hush! put by
The woman. Hush! a shriek — a cry — a breath
Too loud, would startle from its horrent pause
The swooping Death! Go to the door, and listen! —
Now for escape!

DE MAUPRAT.

None — none! Their blades shall pass
This heart to thine.

RICHELIEU (*drily*).

An honourable outwork,
But much too near the citadel. I think

JULIE (*aside*).

Love him! — Ah!
Be still, my heart! (*Aloud.*) Love you I did: — how fondly,
Woman — if women were my listeners now —
Alone could tell! — For ever fled my dream:
Farewell — all 's over!

RICHELIEU.

Nay, my daughter, these
Are but the blinding mists of daybreak love,
Sprung from its very light, and heralding
A noon of happy summer. — Take her hand,
And speak the truth, with which your heart runs over —
That this Count Judas — this Incarnate Falsehood —
Never lied more, than when he told thy Julie
That Adrien loved her not — except, indeed,
When he told Adrien, Julie could betray him.

JULIE (*embracing* DE MAUPRAT).

You love me, then! — you love me! — and they wronged you!

DE MAUPRAT.

Ah! couldst thou doubt it?

RICHELIEU.

Why, the very mole
Less blind than thou! Baradas loves thy wife; —
Had hoped her hand — aspired to be that cloak
To the King's will, which to thy bluntness seems

JULIE.

Henceforth all bond
Between us twain is broken. Were it not
For this old man, I might, in truth, have lost
The right — now mine — to scorn thee!

RICHELIEU.

So, you hear her?

DE MAUPRAT.

Thou with some slander hast her sense infected!

JULIE.

No, Sir: he did excuse thee in despite
Of all that wears the face of truth. Thy *friend* —
Thy *confidant* — familiar — *Baradas* —
Himself revealed thy baseness.

DE MAUPRAT.

Baseness!

RICHELIEU.

Ay;
That *thou* didst *court* dishonour.

DE MAUPRAT.

Baradas!
Where is thy thunder, Heaven? — Duped! — snared! — undone!
Thou — thou couldst not believe him! Thou dost love me!
Love cannot feed on falsehoods!

A kind convenience — a Sir Pandarus
To his own bride, and the august adulterer!
Then did the first great law of human hearts,
Which with the patriot's, not the rebel's, name
Crowned the first Brutus, when the Tarquin fell,
Make Misery royal — raise this desperate wretch
Into thy destiny! Expect no mercy!
Behold De Mauprat!

[*Lifts his visor.*

RICHELIEU.

To thy knees, and crawl
For pardon; or, I tell thee, thou shalt live
For such remorse, that, did I hate thee, I
Would bid thee strike, that I might be avenged!
It was to save my Julie from the King,
That in thy valour I forgave thy crime; —
It was — when thou — the rash and ready tool —
Yea of that shame thou loath'st — didst leave thy hearth
To the polluter — in these arms thy bride
Found the protecting shelter thine withheld.

[*Goes to the side door.*

Julie de Mauprat — Julie!

Enter JULIE.

Lo! my witness!

DE MAUPRAT.

What marvel 's this? — I dream! my Julie — *thou!*
This, thy beloved hand?

RICHELIEU.

I breathe; he is not a hireling. Have I wronged thee?
Beware surmise — suspicion — lies! I am
Too great for men to speak the truth of me!

DE MAUPRAT.

Thy *acts* are thy accusers, Cardinal!
In his hot youth, a soldier, urged to crime
Against the State, placed in your hands his life; —
You did not strike the blow — but o'er his head,
Upon the gossamer thread of your caprice,
Hovered the axe. His the brave spirit's hell,
The twilight terror of suspense; — your death
Had set him free; he purposed not, nor prayed it.
One day you summoned — mocked him with smooth
pardon —
Showered wealth upon him — bade an angel's face
Turn Earth to Paradise ——

RICHELIEU.

Well!

DE MAUPRAT.

Was this mercy?
A Cæsar's generous vengeance? — Cardinal, no!
Judas, not Cæsar, was the model! You
Saved him from death for shame; reserved to grow
The scorn of living men — to his dead sires
Leprous reproach — scoff of the age to come —

RICHELIEU.

Ho, my guards!
Huguet! Montbrassil! Vermont!

DE MAURAT.

Ay, thy spirits
Forsake thee, wizard; thy bold men of mail
Are *my confederates.* Stir not! but one step,
And know the next — thy grave!

RICHELIEU.

Thou liest, knave!
I am old, infirm — most feeble — but thou liest!
Armand de Richelieu dies not by the hand
Of man — the stars have said it — and the voice
Of my own prophet and oracular soul
Confirms the shining Sibyls! — Call them all,
Thy brother butchers! Earth has no such fiend —
No! as one parricide of his fatherland,
Who dares in Richelieu murder France!

DE MAURAT.

Thy stars
Deceive thee, Cardinal; thy soul of wiles
May against kings and armaments avail,
And mock the embattled world; but powerless now
Against the sword of one resolvèd man,
Upon whose forehead thou hast written shame!

DE MAUPRAT.

To slay one weak old man? —
Away! No lesser wrongs than mine can make
This murder lawful. Hence!

HUGUET.

A short farewell!
[*Exit* HUGUET.

Re-enter RICHELIEU (*not perceiving* DE MAUPRAT).

RICHELIEU.

How heavy is the air! — the vestal lamp
Of the sad moon, weary with vigil, dies
In the still temple of the solemn heaven!
The very darkness lends itself to fear —
To treason —

DE MAUPRAT.

And to death!

RICHELIEU.

My omens lied not!
What art thou, wretch?

DE MAUPRAT.

Thy doomsman!

RICHELIEU.

Nay, there 's no danger now. Thou needest rest.
Come, thou shalt lodge beside me. Tush! be cheered.
My rosiest Amazon — thou wrong'st thy Theseus.
All will be well — yes, yet all well.

[*Exeunt through a side door.*

SCENE II.

Enter HUGUET — DE MAUPRAT, *in complete armour, his visor down. The moonlight obscured at the casement.*

HUGUET.

Not here!

DE MAUPRAT.

Oh, I will find him, fear not. Hence and guard
The galleries where the menials sleep — plant sentries
At every outlet — Chance should throw no shadow
Between the vengeance and the victim! Go! —
Ere yon brief vapour that obscures the moon,
As doth our deed pale conscience, pass away,
The mighty shall be ashes.

HUGUET.

Will you not
A second arm?

Darted one guiding ray — to 'scape — to fly —
Reach Adrien, learn the worst — 't was then near midnight:
Trembling I left my chamber — sought the queen —
Fell at her feet — revealed the unholy peril —
Implored her aid to flee our joint disgrace.
Moved, she embraced and soothed me; nay, preserved;
Her word sufficed to unlock the palace-gates:
I hastened home — but home was desolate, —
No Adrien there! Fearing the worst, I fled
To thee, directed hither. As my wheels
Paused at thy gates — the clang of arms behind —
The ring of hoofs —

RICHELIEU.

'T was but my guards, fair trembler.
(So Huguet keeps his word, my omens wronged him.)

JULIE.

Oh, in one hour what years of anguish crowd!

That Heaven had granted to so base a Lord
The heart whose coldest friendship were to him
What Mexico to misers! Stung at last
By my disdain, the dim and glimmering sense
Of his cloaked words broke into bolder light,
And THEN — ah! then, my haughty spirit failed me!
Then I was weak — wept — oh! such bitter tears!
For (turn thy face aside and let me whisper
The horror to thine ear) then did I learn
That he — that Adrien — that my husband — knew
The king's polluting suit, and deemed it *honour!*
Then all the terrible and loathsome truth
Glared on me; — coldness — waywardness, reserve —
Mystery of looks — words — all unravelled, — and
I saw the impostor, where I had loved the god!

RICHELIEU.

I think thou wrong'st thy husband — but proceed.

JULIE.

Did you say "wronged" him? — Cardinal, my father,
Did you say "wronged"? Prove it, and life shall grow
One prayer for thy reward and his forgiveness.

RICHELIEU.

Let me know all.

JULIE.

To the despair he caused
The courtier left me; but amid the chaos

He from the chamber crept — this mighty Louis;
Crept like a baffled felon! — yielded! Ah!
More royalty in woman's honest heart
Than dwells within the crownèd majesty
And sceptred anger of a hundred kings!
Yielded! — Heavens! — yielded!

RICHELIEU.

To my breast, — close — close!
The world would never need a Richelieu, if
Men — bearded, mailèd men — the Lords of Earth —
Resisted flattery, falsehood, avarice, pride,
As this poor child with the dove's innocent scorn
Her sex's tempters, Vanity and Power! —
He left you — well!

JULIE.

Then came a sharper trial!
At the king's suit, the Count de Baradas
Sought me to soothe, to fawn, to flatter, while
On his smooth lip insult appeared more hateful
For the false mask of pity: letting fall
Dark hints of treachery, with a world of sighs

JULIE.

That man —

Why did I love him? — clinging to a breast
That knows no shelter?

Listen — late at noon —

The marriage-day — ev'n then no more a lover —
He left me coldly, — well, — I sought my chamber
To weep and wonder — but to hope and dream.
Sudden a mandate from the King — to attend
Forthwith his pleasure at the Louvre.

RICHELIEU.

Ha!

You did obey the summons; and the King
Reproached your hasty nuptials.

JULIE.

Were that all!

He frowned and chid; proclaimed the bond unlawful:
Bade me not quit my chamber in the palace,
And there at night — alone — this night — all still —
He sought my presence — dared — thou read'st the heart,
Read mine! — I cannot speak it!

RICHELIEU.

He a king, —

You — woman; well, — you yielded!

JULIE.

Cardinal —

Dare you say "yielded"? — Humbled and abashed,

For as great men live not in their own time,
But the next race, — so in the young, my soul
Makes many Richelieus. He will win it yet.
François! — He 's gone. My murder! Marion's warning!
This bravo's threat! O for the morrow's dawn!
I 'll set my spies to work — I 'll make all space
(As does the sun) an Universal Eye —
Huguet shall track — Joseph confess — ha! ha! —
Strange, while I laughed I shuddered — and ev'n now
Through the chill air the beating of my heart
Sounds like a death-watch by a sick man's pillow;
If Huguet *could* deceive me — hoofs without —
The gates unclose — steps near and nearer!

Enter JULIE.

JULIE.

Cardinal!
My father!
[*Falls at his feet.*

RICHELIEU.

Julie at this hour! — and tears!
What ails thee?

JULIE.

I am safe; I am with thee! —

RICHELIEU.

Safe! why in all the storms of this wild world
What wind would mar the violet?

This steel is virgin to thy Lord!" with that
He vanished. — Scared and trembling for thy safety
I mounted, fled, and, kneeling at thy feet,
Implore thee to acquit my faith — but not,
Like him, to spare my life. —

RICHELIEU.

Who spake of *life?*
I bade thee grasp that treasure as thine *honour* —
A jewel worth whole hecatombs of lives!
Begone! — redeem thine honour — back to Marion —
Or Baradas — or Orleans — track the robber —
Regain the packet — or crawl on to Age —
Age and gray hairs like mine — and know, thou hast lost
That which had made thee great and saved thy country. —
See me not till thou 'st bought the right to seek me. —
Away! — Nay, cheer thee, thou hast not failed yet, —
There 's no such word as "fail"!

FRANÇOIS.

Bless you, my Lord,
For that one smile! — I'll wear it on my heart
To light me back to triumph.

[*Exit.*

RICHELIEU.

The poor youth!
An elder had asked life! — I love the young!

RICHELIEU.

Speak not of *me:* thy *country* is in danger!
The adjoining room — So, so — a *separate* treason!
The one thy ruin, France! — the meaner crime,
Left to their tools, my murder! —

FRANÇOIS.

Baradas
Questioned me close — demurred — until, at last,
O'erruled by Orleans, — gave the packet — told me
That life and death were in the scroll — this gold —

RICHELIEU.

Gold is no proof —

FRANÇOIS.

And Orleans promised thousands,
When Bouillon's trumpets in the streets of Paris
Rang out shrill answer. — Hastening from the house,
My footstep in the stirrup, Marion stole
Across the threshold, whispering, "Lose no moment
Ere Richelieu have the packet: tell him too —
Murder is in the wings of Night, and Orleans
Swears, ere the dawn the Cardinal shall be clay."
She said, and trembling fled within; when, lo!
A hand of iron griped me; through the dark
Gleamed the dim shadow of an armèd man:
Ere I could draw — the prize was wrested from me,
And a hoarse voice gasped — "Spy, I spare thee, for

FRANÇOIS.

Kill me, my Lord.

RICHELIEU.

They knew thee — they suspected —
They gave it not ——

FRANÇOIS.

He gave it — *he* — the Count
De Baradas — with his own hand he gave it!

RICHELIEU.

Baradas! Joy! out with it!

FRANÇOIS.

Listen,
And then dismiss me to the headsman.

RICHELIEU.

Ha!
Go on.

FRANÇOIS.

They led me to a chamber — There
Orleans and Baradas — and some half-score,
Whom I know not — were met ——

RICHELIEU.

Not more!

FRANÇOIS.

But from
The adjoining chamber broke the din of voices,
The clattering tread of armèd men; at times
A shriller cry, that yelled out, "Death to Richelieu!"

Hath lost the memories which (so Plato dreamed)
Breathed glory from the earlier star it dwelt in —
O for one galé from thine exulting morning,
Stirring amidst the roses, where of old
Love shook the dew-drops from his glancing hair!
Could I recall the past — or had not set
The prodigal treasures of the bankrupt soul
In one slight bark upon the shoreless sea;
The yokèd steer, after his day of toil,
Forgets the goad, and rests — to me alike
Or day or night — Ambition has no rest!
Shall I resign? — who can resign himself?
For custom is ourself; as drink and food
Become our bone and flesh — the aliments
Nurturing our nobler part, the mind — thoughts, dreams,
Passions, and aims, in the revolving cycle
Of the great alchemy — at length are made
Our mind itself; and yet the sweets of leisure —
An honoured home — far from these base intrigues —
An eyrie on the heaven-kissed heights of wisdom —
[*Taking up the book.*
Speak to me, moralist! — I 'll heed thy counsel.
Were it not best ——

Enter FRANÇOIS *hastily, and in part disguised.*

RICHELIEU (*flinging away the book*).

Philosophy, thou liest!
Quick — the despatch! Power — Empire! Boy — the packet.

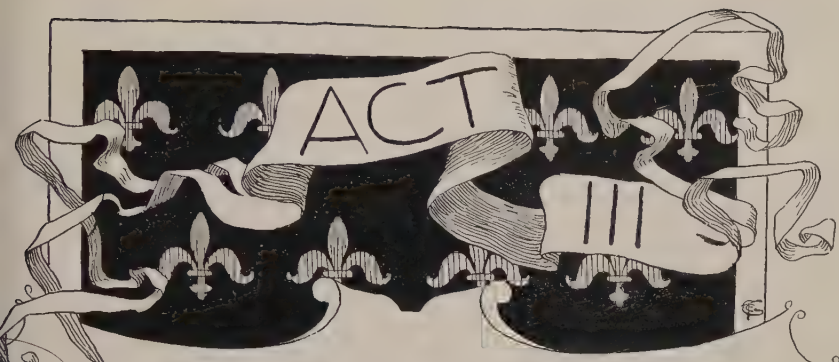
And this is Power? Alas! I am not happy.

[*After a pause.*

And yet the Nile is fretted by the weeds
Its rising roots not up; but never yet
Did one least barrier by a ripple vex
My onward tide, unswept in sport away.
Am I so ruthless then, that I do hate
Them who do hate me? Tush, tush! I do not hate;
Nay, I forgive. The Statesman writes the doom,
But the Priest sends the blessing. I forgive them,
But I destroy; forgiveness is mine own,
Destruction is the State's! For private life,
Scripture the guide — for public, Machiavel.
Would Fortune serve me if the Heaven were wroth?
For chance makes half my greatness. I was born
Beneath the aspect of a bright-eyed star,
And my triumphant adamant of soul
Is but the fixed persuasion of success.
Ah! — here! — that spasm! — again! — How Life and Death
Do wrestle for me momently! — And yet
The King looks pale. I shall outlive the King!
And then, thou insolent Austrian, — who didst gibe
At the ungainly, gaunt, and daring lover,
Sleeking thy looks to silken Buckingham, —
Thou shalt — no matter! — I have outlived love.
O beautiful — all golden — gentle youth!
Making thy palace in the careless front
And hopeful eye of man — ere yet the soul

Weigh in nice scales the motives of the Great,
Ye cannot know what ye have never tried!
History preserves only the fleshless bones
Of what we are — and by the mocking skull
The would-be wise pretend to guess the features!
Without the roundness and the glow of life
How hideous is the skeleton! Without
The colourings and humanities that clothe
Our errors, the anatomists of schools
Can make our memory hideous!
I have wrought
Great uses out of evil tools — and they
In the time to come may bask beneath the light
Which I have stolen from the angry gods,
And warn their sons against the glorious theft,
Forgetful of the darkness which it broke.
I have shed blood, but I have had no foes
Save those the State had; if my wrath was deadly,
'T is that I felt my country in my veins,
And smote her sons as Brutus smote his own.
And yet I am not happy — blanched and seared
Before my time — breathing an air of hate,
And seeing daggers in the eyes of men,
And wasting powers that shake the thrones of earth
In contest with the insects — bearding kings
And braved by lackeys — murder at my bed;
And lone amidst the multitudinous web,
With the dread Three — that are the Fates who hold
The woof and shears — the Monk, the Spy, the Headsman.

I wooed a goddess, and I clasp a cloud.
When I am dust, my name shall, like a star,
Shine through wan space, a glory — and a prophet
Whereby pale seers shall from their aëry towers
Con all the ominous signs, benign or evil,
That make the potent astrologue of kings.
But shall the Future judge me by the ends
That I have wrought — or by the dubious means
Through which the stream of my renown hath run
Into the many-voiced unfathomed Time?
Foul in its bed lie weeds, and heaps of slime,
And with its waves, when sparkling in the sun,
Ofttimes the secret rivulets that swell
Its might of waters blend the hues of blood.
Yet are my sins not those of CIRCUMSTANCE,
That all-pervading atmosphere, wherein
Our spirits, like the unsteady lizard, take
The tints that colour, and the food that nurtures?
Oh! ye, whose hour-glass shifts its tranquil sands
In the unvexed silence of a student's cell; —
Ye, whose untempted hearts have never tossed
Upon the dark and stormy tides where life
Gives battle to the elements, — and man
Wrestles with man for some slight plank, whose weight
Will bear but one — while round the desperate wretch
The hungry billows roar — and the fierce Fate,
Like some huge monster, dim-seen through the surf,
Waits him who drops; — ye safe and formal men,
Who write the deeds, and with unfeverish hand



SECOND DAY (MIDNIGHT).

SCENE I.

RICHELIEU'S *Castle at Ruelle. A Gothic chamber. Moonlight at the window, occasionally obscured.*

RICHELIEU (*reading*).

"In silence, and at night, the Conscience feels
That life should soar to nobler ends than Power."
So sayest thou, sage and sober moralist!
But wert thou tried? — Sublime Philosophy,
Thou art the Patriarch's ladder, reaching heaven,
And bright with beck'ning angels — but, alas!
We see thee, like the Patriarch, but in dreams,
By the first step — dull-slumbering on the earth.
I am not happy! — with the Titan's lust

RICHELIEU.

The indomitable heart
Of Armand Richelieu!

JOSEPH.

Naught beside?

RICHELIEU.

Why, Julie,
My own dear foster-child, forgive me; — yes;
This morning, shining through their happy tears,
Thy soft eyes blessed me! — and thy Lord, — in danger,
He would forsake me not.

JOSEPH.

And Joseph ——

RICHELIEU (*after a pause*).

You ——
Yes, I believe you — yes — for all men fear you —
And the world loves you not. — And I, friend Joseph,
I am the only man who could, my Joseph,
Make you a Bishop. — Come, we 'll go to dinner,
And talk the while of methods to advance
Our Mother Church. — Ah, Joseph, — *Bishop Joseph!*

Meanwhile to my old castle; *you* to court,
Diving with careless eyes into men's hearts,
As ghostly churchmen should do! See the King,
Bid him peruse that sage and holy treatise,
Wherein 't is set forth how a Premier should
Be chosen from the Priesthood — how the King
Should never listen to a single charge
Against his servant, nor conceal one whisper
That the rank envies of a court distil
Into his ear — to fester the fair name
Of my — I mean his Minister! — Oh! Joseph,
A most convincing treatise.
GOOD — all favours,
If François be but bold, and Huguet honest. —
Huguet — I half suspect — he bowed too low —
'T is not his way.

JOSEPH.

This is the curse, my Lord,
Of your high state; — suspicion of all men.

RICHELIEU (*sadly*).

True; — true; — my leeches bribed to poisoners; — pages
To strangle me in sleep. — My very King
(This brain the unresting loom from which was woven
The purple of his greatness) leagued against me.
Old — childless — friendless — broken — all forsake;
All — all — but —

JOSEPH.

What?

Ears of the stag, a footfall like the snow;
You are a valiant fellow; — yea, a trusty,
Religious, exemplary, incorrupt,
And precious jewel of a fellow, Huguet!
If I live long enough, — ay, mark my words ——
If I live long enough, you 'll be a Colonel —
Noble, perhaps! — One hour, Sir, after midnight.

HUGUET.

You leave me dumb with gratitude, my Lord;
I 'll pick the trustiest — (*aside*) Marion's house can furnish!

[*Exit* HUGUET.

RICHELIEU.

How like a spider shall I sit in my hole,
And watch the meshes tremble.

JOSEPH.

But, my Lord,
Were it not wiser still to man the palace,
And seize the traitors in the act?

RICHELIEU.

No; Louis,
Long chafed against me — Julie stolen from him,
Will rouse him more. — He 'll say I hatched the treason,
Or scout my charge: — He half desires my death;
But the despatch to Bouillon, some dark scheme
Against *his* crown — *there* is our weapon, Joseph!
With that, all safe — without it, all is peril!

HUGUET.

By one hour after midnight.

RICHELIEU.

The castle's strong. You know its outlets, Huguet?
Would twenty men, well posted, keep such guard
That not one step—(and Murder's step is stealthy) —
Could glide within — unseen?

HUGUET.

A triple wall —
A drawbridge and portcullis— twenty men
Under my lead, a month might hold that castle
Against a host.

RICHELIEU.

They do not strike till morning,
Yet I will shift the quarter — Bid the grooms
Prepare the litter — I will hence to Ruelle
While daylight last — and one hour after midnight
You and your twenty saints shall seek me thither!
You're made to rise! — You are, Sir; — eyes of lynx,

HUGUET.

Great bribes!

RICHELIEU (*to* JOSEPH).

Good lack, he knows some paragons
Superior to great bribes!

HUGUET.

True gentlemen
Who have transgressed the laws — and value life
And lack not gold; your Eminence alone
Can grant them pardon. *Ergo*, you can trust them!

RICHELIEU.

Logic! — So be it — let this *honest* twenty
Be armed and mounted — (*Aside.*) So they meet at midnight,
The attempt on me to-morrow — Ho! we 'll strike
'Twixt wind and water. — (*Aloud.*) Does it need much time
To find these ornaments to Human Nature?

HUGUET.

My Lord — the trustiest of them are not birds
That love the daylight. — I do know a haunt
Where they meet nightly —

RICHELIEU.

Ere the dawn be gray,
All could be armed, assembled, and at Ruelle
In my old hall?

This pomp, this palace? perishable bawbles?
In this world, two things only are immortal —
Fame and a People!

Enter HUGUET.

HUGUET.

My Lord Cardinal,
Your Eminence bade me seek you at this hour.

RICHELIEU.

Did I? — True, Huguet. — So — you overheard
Strange talk amongst these gallants? Snares and traps
For Richelieu? — Well — we 'll balk them; let me think —
The men-at-arms you head — how many?

HUGUET.

Twenty,
My Lord.

RICHELIEU.

All trusty?

HUGUET.

Yes, for ordinary
Occasions — if for great ones, I would change
Three fourths at least.

RICHELIEU.

Ay, what are great occasions?

RICHELIEU.

False monk, not so,
But for the purple and the power wherein
State clothes herself. — I love my native land
Not as Venetian, Englisher, or Swiss,
But as a Noble and a Priest of France;
"All things for France" — lo, my eternal maxim!
The vital axle of the restless wheels
That bear me on! With her I have entwined
My passions and my fate — my crimes, my virtues —
Hated and loved, and schemed, and shed men's blood,
As the calm crafts of Tuscan Sages teach
Those who would make their country great. Beyond
The map of France — my heart can travel not,
But fills that limit to its farthest verge;
And while I live — Richelieu and France are one.]
We Priests, to whom the Church forbids in youth
The plighted one — to manhood's toil denies
The soother helpmate — from our withered age
Shuts the sweet blossoms of the second spring
That smiles in the name of Father — we are yet
Not holier than humanity, and must
Fulfil Humanity's condition — Love!
Debarred the Actual, we but breathe a life
To the chill Marble of the Ideal — Thus,
In thy unseen and abstract Majesty,
My France — my Country, I have bodied forth
A thing to love. What are these robes of state,

That all the summer of my fate shall seem
Fruitless beside the autumn!

[HUGUET *holds up his hand menacingly, and creeps out.*

JOSEPH.

The saints grant it!

RICHELIEU (*solemnly*).

Yes — for sweet France, Heaven grant it! — O my country,
For thee — thee only — though men deem it not —
Are toil and terror my familiars! — I
Have made thee great and fair — upon thy brows
Wreathed the old Roman laurel: — at thy feet
Bowed nations down. — No pulse in my ambition
Whose beatings were not measured from thy heart!
[In the old times before us, patriots lived
And died for liberty —

JOSEPH.

As you would live
And die for despotry —

JOSEPH.

Yes: — a Colonel's rank,
And Letters of Nobility.

RICHELIEU.

What, Huguet! —

[*Here* HUGUET *enters, as to address the* CARDINAL, *who does not perceive him.*

HUGUET.

My own name, soft — (*glides behind the screen*).

RICHELIEU.

Colonel and Nobleman!
My bashful Huguet — that can never be! —
We have him not the less — we 'll *promise it!*
And see the King withholds! — Ah, kings are oft
A great convenience to a minister!
No wrong to Huguet either; — Moralists
Say, Hope is sweeter than Possession! — Yes! —
We 'll count on Huguet! Favours *past* do gorge
Our dogs; leave service drowsy — dull the scent,
Slacken the speed; — favours *to come,* my Joseph,
Produce a lusty, hungry gratitude,
A ravenous zeal, that of the commonest cur
Would make a Cerberus. — You are right; this treason
Assumes a fearful aspect: — but once crushed,
Its very ashes shall manure the soil
Of power; and ripen such full sheaves of greatness,

RICHELIEU.

Fail — fail?
In the lexicon of youth, which Fate reserves
For a bright manhood, there is no such word
As — *fail!* — (You will instruct him further, Marion.)
Follow her — but at distance; — speak not to her,
Till you are housed. — Farewell, boy! Never say
"*Fail*" again.

FRANÇOIS.

I will not!

RICHELIEU (*patting his locks*).

There 's my young hero! —
[*Exeunt* FRANÇOIS, MARION.

RICHELIEU.

So, they would seize my person in this palace? —
I cannot guess their scheme; — but my retinue
Is here too large! — a single traitor could
Strike impotent the faith of thousands; — Joseph,
Art sure of Huguet? — Think — we hanged his Father!

JOSEPH.

But you have bought the Son; — heaped favours on him!

RICHELIEU.

Trash! — favours past — that 's nothing. — In his hours
Of confidence with you, has he named the favours
To *come* — he counts on?

Enter FRANÇOIS.

RICHELIEU.

Follow this fair lady;
(Find him the suiting garments, Marion,) take
My fleetest steed: — arm thyself to the teeth;
A packet will be given you — with orders,
No matter what! — The instant that your hand
Closes upon it — clutch *it*, like your honour,
Which Death alone can steal, or ravish — set
Spurs to your steed — be breathless, till you stand
Again before me. — Stay, Sir! — You will find me
Two short leagues hence — at Ruelle, in my castle.
Young man, be blithe! — for — note me — from the hour
I grasp that packet — think your guardian Star
Rains fortune on you! —

FRANÇOIS.

If I fail —

RICHELIEU.

Darling Marion!

[*Goes to the table, and returns with a large bag of gold.*
There — pshaw — a trifle! — What an eye you have!
And what a smile — child! — (*kisses her*) — Ah! you
fair perdition —
'T is well I 'm old!

MARION (*aside and seriously*).

What a great man he is!

RICHELIEU.

You are sure they meet? — the hour?

MARION.

At midnight.

RICHELIEU.

And
You will engage to give the Duke's despatch
To whom I send?

MARION.

Ay, marry!

RICHELIEU (*aside*).

Huguet? No;
He will be wanted elsewhere. — Joseph? — zealous,
But too well known — too much the *elder* brother!
Mauprat — alas! it is his wedding day! —
François? — the Man of Men! — unnoted — young;
Ambitious — (*goes to the door*) — François!

RICHELIEU.

Aha! —
Has Bouillon too turned traitor? — So methought! —
What part of Italy?

MARION.

The Piedmont frontier,
Where Bouillon lies encamped.

RICHELIEU.

Now there is danger!
Great danger! — If he tamper with the Spaniard,
And Louis list not to my counsel, as,
Without sure proof, he will not, — France is lost.
What more?

MARION.

Dark hints of some design to seize
Your person in your palace. Nothing clear —
His Highness trembled while he spoke — the words
Did choke each other.

RICHELIEU.

So! — Who is the brother
You recommended to the Duke?

MARION.

Whoever
Your Eminence may father! —

RICHELIEU.

Hist! — Joseph,
Keep guard. [JOSEPH *retires to the principal entrance.*
My faithful Marion!

MARION.

Good, my Lord,
They meet to-night in my poor house. The Duke
Of Orleans heads them.

RICHELIEU.

Yes — go on.

MARION.

His Highness
Much questioned if I knew some brave, discreet,
And vigilant man, whose tongue could keep a secret,
And who had those twin qualities for service,
The love of gold, the hate of Richelieu. —

RICHELIEU.

You? —

MARION.

Made answer, "Yes — my brother; — bold and trusty;
Whose faith, my faith could pledge;" — the Duke then bade me
Have him equipped and armed — well mounted — ready
This night to part for Italy.

The stalwart Englisher, — no mongrels, boy,
Those island mastiffs, — mark the notch — a deep one —
His casque made here, — I shore him to the waist!
A toy — a feather — then!

[*Tries to wield, and lets it fall.*

You see, a child could
Slay Richelieu, now.

FRANÇOIS (*his hand on his hilt*).

But *now*, at your command
Are other weapons, my good Lord.

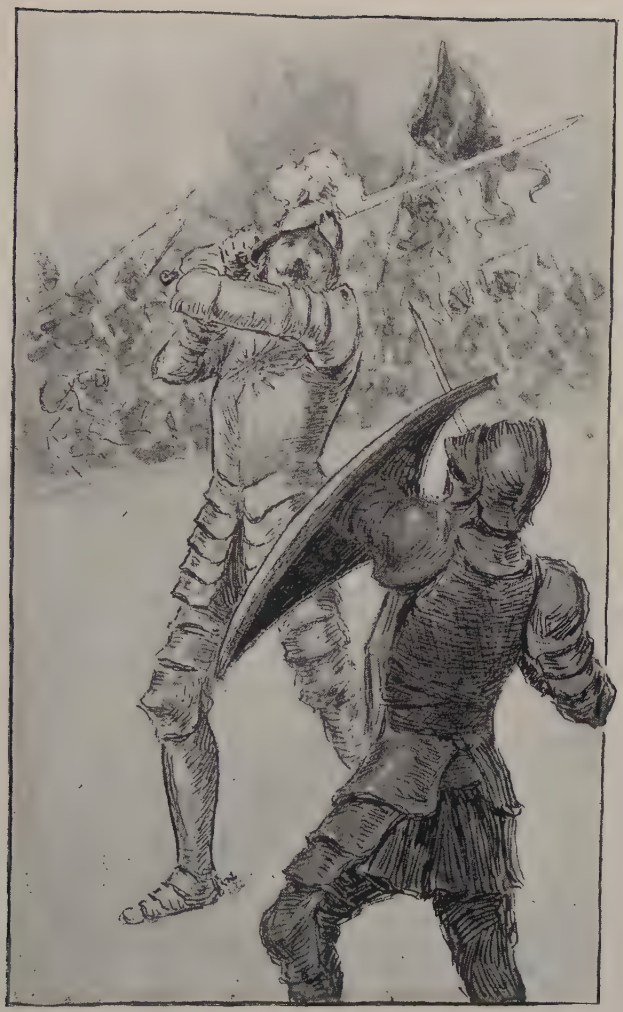
RICHELIEU (*who has seated himself as to write, lifts the pen*).

True, — THIS!
Beneath the rule of men entirely great
The pen is mightier than the sword. Behold
The arch-enchanter's wand! — itself a nothing! —
But taking sorcery from the master-hand
To paralyse the Cæsars — and to strike
The loud earth breathless! — Take away the sword —
States can be saved without it! [*Looking on the clock.*
'T is the hour, —
Retire, Sir. [*Exit* FRANÇOIS.

[*A knock is heard. A door concealed in the arras opens cautiously. Enter* MARION DE LORME.

JOSEPH (*amazed*).

Marion de Lorme!



At their fingers' end." — "So be it," quoth the other,
"I will be there — Marion de Lorme's — at midnight!"

RICHELIEU.

I have them, man, — I have them!

JOSEPH.

So they say
Of you, my Lord; — believe me, that their plans
Are mightier than you deem. You must employ
Means no less vast to meet them!

RICHELIEU.

Bah! in policy
We foil gigantic danger, not by giants,
But dwarfs. —— The statues of our stately fortune
Are sculptured by the chisel — not the axe!
Ah! were I younger — by the knightly heart
That beats beneath these priestly robes, I would
Have pastime with these cut-throats! — Yea, as when,
Lured to the ambush of the expecting foe, —
I clove my pathway through the plumèd sea!
Reach me yon falchion, François, — not that bawble
For carpet-warriors, — yonder — such a blade
As old Charles Martel might have wielded when
He drove the Saracen from France.

[FRANÇOIS *brings him one of the long two-handed swords worn in the middle ages.*

With this
I, at Rochelle, did hand to hand engage

BARADAS.

Bravely said!
At midnight, — Marion's! — Nay, I cannot leave thee
To thoughts that ——

DE MAUPRAT.

Speak not to me! — I am yours! —
But speak not! There 's a voice within my soul,
Whose cry could drown the thunder. — Oh! if men
Will play dark sorcery with the heart of man,
Let they who raise the spell beware the Fiend!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Room in the Palais Cardinal (*as in the First Act*).

RICHELIEU *and* JOSEPH. FRANÇOIS *writing at a table.*

JOSEPH.

Yes; — Huguet, taking his accustomed round, —
Disguised as some plain burgher, — heard these rufflers
Quoting your name: — he listened, — "Pshaw!" said one,
"We are to seize the Cardinal in his palace
To-morrow!" — "How?" the other asked. — "You 'll hear
The whole design to-night; the Duke of Orleans
And Baradas have got the map of action

Than a few hours of cold, imperious courtship.
Were Richelieu *dust*—no danger!

DE MAUPRAT.

Ghastly Vengeance!
To thee, and thine august and solemn sister,
The unrelenting Death, I dedicate
The blood of Armand Richelieu! When Dishonour
Reaches our hearths, Law dies, and Murder takes
The angel shape of Justice!

I shall carve out — who knows — perchance a throne!
All in despite of my Lord Cardinal. —

Enter DE MAUPRAT *from the Gardens.*

DE MAUPRAT.

Speak! can it be? — Methought that from the terrace
I saw the carriage of the King — and Julie!
No! — no! — my frenzy peoples the void air
With its own phantoms!

BARADAS.

Nay, too true. — Alas!
Was ever lightning swifter, or more blasting,
Than Richelieu's forkèd guile?

DE MAUPRAT.

I 'll to the Louvre ——

BARADAS.

And lose all hope! — The Louvre! — the sure gate
To the Bastile!

DE MAUPRAT.

The King ——

BARADAS.

Is but the wax,
Which Richelieu stamps! Break the malignant *seal*,
And I will raze the print. Come, man, take heart!
Her virtue well could brave a sterner trial

JULIE (*to* BARADAS).

You 'll see him —
And you will tell him!

BARADAS.

From the flowers of Hybla
Never more gladly did the bee bear honey,
Than I take sweetness from those rosiest lips,
Though to the hive of others!

COURTIER (*to* DE BERINGHEN).

Come, Messire.

DE BERINGHEN (*hesitating*).

One moment, just to —

COURTIER.

Come, Sir.

DE BERINGHEN.

I shall not
Discuss the pâté after all. 'Ecod,
I 'm puzzled now. I don't know who 's the best of it!

[*Exeunt* JULIE, DE BERINGHEN, *and* Courtier.

BARADAS.

Now will this fire his fever into madness!
All is made clear: Mauprat *must* murder Richelieu —
Die for that crime: — I shall console his Julie —
This will reach Bouillon! — from the wrecks of France

DE BERINGHEN.

Pshaw!
And a man filled with as sublime a pâté
Has no time to discuss ambition. — 'Gad,
I have the best of it!

Enter JULIE *hastily, with first* Courtier.

JULIE (*to* Courtier).

A summons, Sir,
To attend the Louvre? — On *this* day, too?

COURTIER.

Madame,
The royal carriage waits below. — Messire, (*to* De Beringhen),
You will return with us.

JULIE.

What can this mean? —
Where is my husband?

BARADAS.

He has left the house,
Perhaps till nightfall — so he bade me tell you.
Alas, were I the lord of such fair treasure —

JULIE (*impatiently.*)

Till nightfall? — Strange — my heart misgives me!

COURTIER.

Madame,
My orders will not brook delay.

There shall we sign: thence send this scroll (*showing it*) to Bouillon.
You 're in that secret (*affectionately*) — one of our new Council.

DE BERINGHEN.

But to admit the Spaniard — France's foe —
Into the heart of France, — dethrone the King, —
It looks like treason, and I smell the headsman.

BARADAS.

Oh, Sir, too late to falter: when we meet
We must arrange the separate — coarser scheme,
For Richelieu's death. Of this despatch De Mauprat
Must nothing learn. He only bites at vengeance,
And he would start from treason. — We must post him
Without the door at Marion's — as a sentry.
(*Aside*). — So, when his head is on the block — his tongue
Cannot betray our more august designs!

DE BERINGHEN.

I 'll meet you if the King can spare me. — (*Aside.*) No!
I am too old a goose to play with foxes,
I 'll roost at home. Meanwhile, in the next room
There 's a delicious pâté, — let 's discuss it.

BARADAS.

Pshaw! a man filled with a sublime ambition
Has no time to discuss your pâtés.

DE BERINGHEN.

Poor Mauprat!
Yet, since *you* love the lady, why so careless
Of the King's suit?

BARADAS.

Because the lady's virtuous,
And the King timid. Ere he win the suit
He 'll lose the crown, — the bride will be a widow, —
And I — the Richelieu of the Regent Orleans.

DE BERINGHEN.

Is Louis still so chafed against the Fox
For snatching yon fair dainty from the Lion?

BARADAS.

So chafed, that Richelieu totters. Yes, the King
Is half conspirator against the Cardinal.
Enough of this. I 've found the man we wanted, —
The man to head the hands that murder Richelieu, —
The man, whose name the synonyme for daring.

DE BERINGHEN.

He must mean me! — No, Count, I am — I own,
A valiant dog — but still —

BARADAS.

Whom can I mean
But Mauprat? — Mark, to-night we meet at Marion's,

Were Richelieu dead — his power were mine; and Louis
Should soon forget his passion and your crime.
But whither now?

DE MAUPRAT.

I know not: I scarce hear thee;
A little while for thought: anon I 'll join thee;
But now, all air seems tainted, and I loathe
The face of man!

[*Exit* DE MAUPRAT *through the Gardens.*

BARADAS.

Start from the chase, my prey,
But as thou speed'st, the hell-hounds of Revenge
Pant in thy track and dog thee down.

Enter DE BERINGHEN, *his mouth full, a napkin in his hand.*

DE BERINGHEN.

Chevalier,
Your cook 's a miracle, — what, my Host gone?
Faith, Count, my office is a post of danger —
A fiery fellow, Mauprat! touch and go, —
Match and saltpetre, — pr—r—r—r—!

BARADAS.

You
Will be released erelong. The King resolves
To call the bride to court this day.

Under the venom of one laidly nightshade,
Wither the lilies of all France.

DE MAUPRAT (*impatiently*).

But Julie —

BARADAS (*unheeding him*).

As yet the Fiend that serves hath saved his power
From every snare; and in the epitaphs
Of many victims dwells a warning moral
That preaches caution. Were I not assured
That what before was hope is ripened now
Into most certain safety, trust me, Mauprat,
I still could hush my hate and mark thy wrongs,
And say, "Be patient!" — *Now*, the King himself
Smiles kindly when I tell him that his peers
Will rid him of his Priest. You knit your brows,
Noble impatience! — Pass we to our scheme!]
'T is Richelieu's wont, each morn, within his chapel,
(Hypocrite worship ended,) to dispense
Alms to the Mendicant friars, — in that guise
A band (yourself the leader) shall surround
And seize the despot.

DE MAUPRAT.

But the King? — but Julie?

BARADAS.

The King, infirm in health, in mind more feeble,
Is but the plaything of a Minister's will.

Scaffolds are monuments — the Kingly House
Shorn of its beams — the Royal Sun of France
'Clipsed by this blood-red comet. Where we turn,

Nothing but Richelieu! — Armies — Church — State —
Laws,
But mirrors that do multiply his beams.
He sees all — acts all — Argus and Briaræus —
Spy at our boards — and deathsman at our hearths,

BARADAS.

You have the proof — the royal Letter: —
Your strange exemption from the general pardon,
Known but to me and Richelieu; can you doubt
Your friend to acquit your foe? The truth is glaring —
Richelieu alone could tell the princely Lover
The tale which sells your life, — or buys your honour!

DE MAUPRAT.

I see it all! — Mock pardon — hurried nuptials —
False bounty! — all! — the serpent of that smile!
Oh! it stings home!

BARADAS.

You yet shall crush his malice;
Our plans are sure: — Orleans is at our head;
We meet to-night; join us, and with us triumph.

DE MAUPRAT.

To-night? — Oh Heaven! — my marriage night! —
Revenge!

BARADAS.

[What class of men, whose white lips do not curse
The grim, insatiate, universal tyrant?
We, noble-born — where are our antique rights —
Our feudal seigniories — our castled strength,
That did divide us from the base Plebeians,
And made our swords our law — where are they? — trod
To dust — and o'er the graves of our dead power

Enter BARADAS.

You spoke of snares — of vengeance
Sharper than death — be plainer.

BARADAS.

What so clear?
Richelieu has but two passions ——

DE MAUPRAT.

Richelieu!

BARADAS.

Yes!
Ambition and revenge — in you both blended.
First for Ambition — Julie is his ward,
Innocent — docile — pliant to his will —
He placed her at the court — foresaw the rest —
The King loves Julie!

DE MAUPRAT.

Merciful Heaven! The King!

BARADAS.

Such Cupids lend new plumes to Richelieu's wings:
But the court etiquette must give such Cupids
The veil of Hymen — (Hymen but in name).
He looked abroad — found you his foe: — *thus* served
Ambition — by the grandeur of his ward,
And vengeance — by dishonour to his foe!

DE MAUPRAT.

Prove this.

DE MAUPRAT.

I know the King can send me to the scaffold —
Dark prospect! — but I 'm used to it; and if
The Church and Council, by this hour to-morrow,
One way or other settle not the matter,
I will ——

DE BERINGHEN.

What, my dear Sir?

DE MAUPRAT.

Show you the door,
My dear, dear Sir; talk as I please, with whom
I please, in my own house, dear Sir, until
His Majesty shall condescend to find
A stouter gentleman than you, dear Sir,
To take me out; and now you understand me,
My dear, most dear — Oh, damnably dear Sir!

DE BERINGHEN.

What, almost in a passion! you will cool
Upon reflection. Well, since *Madame* 's absent,
I 'll take a small refreshment. Now, don't stir;
Be careful; — how 's your burgundy? — I 'll taste it;
Finish it all before I leave you. Nay,
No form; — you see I make myself at home.

[*Exit* DE BERINGHEN.

DE MAUPRAT (*going to the door through which* BARADAS *had passed*).

Baradas! Count!

Or — stay — no, by the statue — eh? — of Cupid.
Bring it.

DE MAUPRAT.

Did ever now one pair of shoulders
Carry such wagon-loads of impudence
Into a gentleman's drawing-room?
Dear Julie,
I'm busy — letters — visitors — the devil!
I do beseech you leave me — I say — leave me.

JULIE (*weeping*).

You are unkind.

[*Exit.*

[*As she goes out,* MAUPRAT *drops on one knee and kisses the hem of her mantle, unseen by her.*

DE BERINGHEN.

Ten million of apologies ——

DE MAUPRAT.

I'll not take one of them. I have, as yet,
Withstood all things — my heart — my love — my rights.
But Julie's tears! —— When is this farce to end?

DE BERINGHEN.

Oh! when you please. His Majesty requests me,
As soon as you infringe his gracious orders,
To introduce you to the Governour
Of the Bastile. I should have had that honour
Before, but, 'gad, my foible is good-nature;
One can't be hard upon a friend's infirmities.

JULIE.

He says he loves me,
And starts away, as if to say "I love you"
Meant something *very* dreadful. — Come, sit by me, —
I place your chair! — fie on your gallantry!

[*They sit down; as he pushes his chair back, she draws hers nearer.*

Why must this strange Messire de Beringhen
Be always here? He never takes a hint.
Do you not wish him gone?

DE MAUPRAT.

Upon my soul
I do, my Julie! — Send him for your *bouquet*,
Your glove, your — anything.

JULIE.

Messire de Beringhen,
I dropped my glove in the gardens by the fountain,
Or the alcove, or — stay — no, by the statue
Of Cupid; may I ask you to ——

DE BERINGHEN.

To send for it?
Certainly (*ringing a bell on the table*). André, Pierre,
(your rascals, how
Do ye call them?)

Enter Servants.

Ah — *Madame* has dropped her glove
In the gardens, by the fountain, — or the alcove;

DE MAUPRAT.

I shall go mad! — I do, indeed I do —

DE BERINGHEN (*aside*).

Not love her! that were highly disrespectful.

JULIE.

You do — what, Adrien?

DE MAUPRAT.

Oh! I do, indeed ——

I do think, that this weather is delightful!
A charming day! the sky is so serene!
And what a prospect! — (*to* DE BERINGHEN) — Oh!
you Popinjay!

JULIE.

He jests at me! — he mocks me! — yet I love him,
And every look becomes the lips we love!
Perhaps I am too grave? — You laugh at Julie;
If laughter please you, welcome be the music!
Only say, Adrien, that you love me.

DE MAUPRAT (*kissing her hand*).

Ay;

With my whole heart I love you! ——

Now, Sir, go,

And tell that to his Majesty! — Who ever
Heard of its being a state offence to kiss
The hand of one's own wife?

DE MAUPRAT.

Not when I see thee.

[*He is about to lift her hand to his lips when* DE BERINGHEN *coughs and pulls his mantle.* MAUPRAT *drops the hand and walks away.*

JULIE.

Alas!
Should he not love me?

DE BERINGHEN (*aside*).

Have a care; I must
Report each word — each gesture to his Majesty.

DE MAUPRAT.

Sir, if you were not in his Majesty's service,
You 'd be the most officious, impudent,
Damned busy-body ever interfering
In a man's family affairs.

DE BERINGHEN.

But as
I do belong, Sir, to his Majesty —

DE MAUPRAT.

You 're lucky! — Still, were we a story higher,
'T were prudent not to go too near the window.

JULIE.

Adrien, what have I done? Say, am I changed
Since yesterday? — or was it but for wealth,
Ambition, life — that — that — you swore you loved me?

BARADAS.

Hold, beware! — Stir not
Till we confer again.

DE MAUPRAT.

Speak out, man! —

BARADAS.

Hush!
Your wife! — De Beringhen! — Be on your guard —
Obey the royal orders to the letter.
I 'll look around your palace. By my troth
A princely mansion!

DE MAUPRAT.

Stay ——

BARADAS.

So new a bridegroom
Can want no visitors; — Your servant, Madam!
Oh! happy pair — Oh! charming picture!
[*Exit through a side-door.*

JULIE.

Adrien,
You left us suddenly — Are you not well?

DE MAUPRAT.

Oh, very well — that is — extremely ill!

JULIE.

Ill, Adrien? [*Taking his hand.*

formal annulment of the marriage, and with our Council on the punishment to be awarded to Messire de Mauprat, who is cautioned for his own sake to preserve silence as to our injunction, more especially to Mademoiselle de Mortemar.

" Given under our hand and seal at the Louvre.

" LOUIS."

BARADAS (*returning the letter*).

Amazement! — Did not Richelieu say, the King
Knew not your crime?

DE MAUPRAT.

He said so.

BARADAS.

Poor De Mauprat! —
See you the snare, the vengeance worse than death,
Of which you are the victim?

DE MAUPRAT.

Ha!

BARADAS (*aside*).

It works!

[JULIE *and* DE BERINGHEN *in the Gardens.*

You have not sought the Cardinal yet to ——

DE MAUPRAT.

No!
Scarce yet my sense awakened from the shock;
Now I will seek him.

BARADAS.

Well? —

DE MAUPRAT.

Wide flew the doors, and lo,
Messire de Beringhen, and this epistle!

BARADAS.

'T is the King's hand! — the royal seal!

DE MAUPRAT.

Read — read —

BARADAS (*reading*).

"Whereas Adrien de Mauprat, Colonel and Chevalier in our armies, being already guilty of High Treason, by the seizure of our town of Faviaux, has presumed, without our knowledge, consent, or sanction, to connect himself by marriage with Julie de Mortemar, a wealthy orphan attached to the person of Her Majesty, without our knowledge or consent — We do hereby proclaim and declare the said marriage contrary to law. On penalty of death, Adrien de Mauprat will not communicate with the said Julie de Mortemar by word or letter, save in the presence of our faithful servant the Sieur de Beringhen, and then with such respect and decorum as are due to a Demoiselle attached to the Court of France, until such time as it may suit our royal pleasure to confer with the Holy Church on the

BARADAS.

Riddles again!

DE MAUPRAT.

You know what chanced between
The Cardinal and myself.

BARADAS.

This morning brought
Your letter: — faith, a strange account! I laughed
And wept at once for gladness.

DE MAUPRAT.

We were wed
At noon; — the rite performed, came hither; — scarce
Arrived, when ——

But art thou farther from the headsman, fool?
Thy secret I have whispered to the King; —
Thy marriage makes the King thy foe. — Thou stand'st
On the abyss — and in the pool below
I see a ghastly, headless phantom mirrored; —
Thy likeness ere the marriage moon hath waned.
Meanwhile — meanwhile — ha — ha, if thou art wedded,
Thou art not wived.

Enter MAUPRAT (*splendidly dressed*).

DE MAUPRAT.

Was ever fate like mine?
So blest, and yet so wretched!

BARADAS.

Joy, De Mauprat! —
Why, what a brow, man, for your wedding day!

DE MAUPRAT.

Jest not! — Distraction!

BARADAS.

What, your wife a shrew
Already? Courage, man — the common lot!

DE MAUPRAT.

Oh! that she were less lovely, or less loved!

SECOND DAY.

Scene I.

A splendid apartment in Mauprat's *new House. Casements opening to the Gardens, beyond which the domes of the Luxembourg Palace.*

Enter Baradas.

Baradas.

Mauprat's new home: — too splendid for a soldier!
But o'er his floors — the while I stalk — methinks
My shadow spreads gigantic to the gloom
The old rude towers of the Bastile cast far
Along the smoothness of the jocund day. —
Well, thou hast 'scaped the fierce caprice of Richelieu;

RICHELIEU.

Thou shalt seek
Temple and priest right soon; the morrow's sun
Shall see thee across these barren thresholds pass
The fairest bride in Paris. — Go, my children;
Even *I* loved once! —— Be lovers while ye may!
How is it with you, Sir? You bear it bravely:
You know, it asks the courage of a lion.

[*Exeunt* JULIE *and* DE MAUPRAT.

RICHELIEU.

Oh! godlike Power! Woe, Rapture, Penury, Wealth, —
Marriage and Death, for one infirm old man
Through a great empire to dispense — withhold —
As the will whispers! And shall things — like motes
That live in my daylight — lackeys of court wages,
Dwarfed starvelings — manikins, upon whose shoulders
The burden of a province were a load
More heavy than the globe on Atlas, — cast
Lots for my robes and sceptre? France! I love thee!
All Earth shall never pluck thee from my heart!
My mistress France — my wedded wife, — sweet France,
Who shall proclaim divorce for thee and me!

[*Exit* RICHELIEU.

RICHELIEU.

Hush — hush — This line must be considered!

JULIE.

Are we not both your children?

RICHELIEU.

What a couplet! ——
How now! Oh! Sir — you live!

DE MAUPRAT.

Why, no, methinks,
Elysium is not life!

JULIE.

He smiles! — you smile,
My father! From my heart for ever now
I 'll blot the name of orphan!

RICHELIEU.

Rise, my children,
For ye are mine — mine both; — and in your sweet
And young delight — your love — (life's first-born glory)
My own lost youth breathes musical!

DE MAUPRAT.

I 'll seek
Temple and priest henceforward; — were it but
To learn Heaven's choicest blessings.

RICHELIEU.

True, I pity you;
But business first, then pleasure.

[*Exit* JOSEPH.

RICHELIEU (*seats himself and reading*).

Ah, sublime!

Enter DE MAUPRAT *and* JULIE.

DE MAUPRAT.

Oh, speak, my Lord — I dare not think you mock me.
And yet ——

To fruit, — the Dead Sea's fruit of ashes; ashes
Which I will scatter to the winds.
Go, Joseph;
When you return I have a feast for you;
The last great act of my great play: the verses,
Methinks, are fine, — ah, very fine. — *You* write
Verses! — (*aside*) *such* verses! — You have wit, discernment.

JOSEPH (*aside*).

Worse than the scourge! Strange that so great a statesman
Should be so bad a poet.

RICHELIEU.

What dost thou say?

JOSEPH.

That it is strange so great a statesman should
Be so sublime a poet.

RICHELIEU.

Ah, you rogue;
Laws die, Books never. Of my ministry
I am not vain! but of my muse, I own it.
Come, you shall hear the verses now.
[*Takes up a MS.*

JOSEPH.

My Lord,
The deeds, the notaries!

JOSEPH.

And when
Check the conspiracy?

RICHELIEU.

Check, check? Full way to it.
Let it bud, ripen, flaunt i' the day, and burst

Methought I saw that smile again! — Who else,
Look you, in all the court — who else so well
Brave or supplant the favourite; — balk the King —
Baffle their schemes? — I have tried him: — He has honour
And courage; — qualities that eagle-plume
Men's souls, — and fit them for the fiercest sun,
Which ever melted the weak waxen minds
That flutter in the beams of gaudy Power!
Besides, he has taste, this Mauprat: — When my play
Was acted to dull tiers of lifeless gapers,
Who had no soul for poetry, I saw him
Applaud in the proper places; — trust me, Joseph,
He is a man of an uncommon promise!

JOSEPH.

And yet your foe.

RICHELIEU.

Have I not foes enow? —
Great men gain doubly when they make foes friends.
Remember my grand maxims: — First employ
All methods to conciliate.

JOSEPH.

Failing these?

RICHELIEU (*fiercely*).

All means to crush: as with the opening and
The clenching of this little hand, I will
Crush the small venom of these stinging courtiers.
So, so, we 've baffled Baradas.

Enter JOSEPH.

Methinks your cheek hast lost its rubies;
I fear you have been too lavish of the flesh;
The scourge is heavy.

JOSEPH.

Pray you, change the subject.

RICHELIEU.

You good men are so modest — Well, to business!
Go instantly — deeds — notaries! — bid my stewards
Arrange my house by the Luxembourg — *my* house
No more! — a bridal present to my ward,
Who weds to-morrow.

JOSEPH.

Weds, with whom?

RICHELIEU.

De Mauprat.

JOSEPH.

Penniless husband!

RICHELIEU.

Bah! the mate for beauty
Should be a man, and not a money-chest!
When her brave sire lay on his bed of death,
I vowed to be a father to his Julie: —
And so he died — the smile upon his lips! —
And when I spared the life of her young lover,

That holiest temple — the Heaven-builded soul —
Breathes the recorded vow. — Base knight, — false lover
Were he, who bartered all that brightened grief,
Or sanctified despair, for life and gold.
Revoke your mercy; — I prefer the fate
I looked for!

RICHELIEU.

Huguet! to the tapestry chamber
Conduct your prisoner. (*To* MAUPRAT.)
You will there behold
The executioner: — your doom be private —
And Heaven have mercy on you! —

DE MAUPRAT.

When I am dead,
Tell her, I loved her.

RICHELIEU.

Keep such follies, Sir,
For fitter ears; — go —

DE MAUPRAT.

Does he mock me?
[*Exeunt* DE MAUPRAT, HUGUET.

RICHELIEU.

Joseph!
Come forth.

RICHELIEU.

Traitor, thou triflest with me! — I know *all!*
Thou hast dared to love my ward — my charge.

DE MAUPRAT.

As rivers
May love the sunlight — basking in the beams,
And hurrying on! —

RICHELIEU.

Thou hast told her of thy love?

DE MAUPRAT.

My Lord, if I had dared to love a maid,
Lowliest in France, I would not so have wronged her,
As bid her link rich life and virgin hope
With one, the deathman's gripe might, from her side,
Pluck at the nuptial altar.

RICHELIEU.

I believe thee;
Yet since she knows not of thy love, renounce her; —
Take life and fortune with another! — Silent?

DE MAUPRAT.

Your fate has been one triumph — You know not
How blessed a thing it was in my dark hour
To nurse the one sweet thought you bid me banish.
Love hath no need of words; — nor less within

Genius, some say, — some, Fortune, — Witchcraft, some.
Not so; — my art was JUSTICE! — Force and Fraud
Misname it cruelty — you shall confute them!
My champion YOU! — You met me as your foe,
Depart my friend — You shall not die.
— France needs you.
You shall wipe off all stains, — be rich,
be honoured,
Be great. ——

[DE MAUPRAT *falls on his knee* — RICHELIEU *raises him.*

I ask, Sir, in return, this hand,
To gift it with a bride, whose dower shall
match,
Yet not exceed, her beauty.

DE MAUPRAT.

I, my Lord, — (*hesitating*).
I have no wish to marry.

RICHELIEU.

Surely, Sir,
To die were worse.

DE MAUPRAT.

Scarcely; the poorest coward
Must die, — but knowingly to march to marriage —
My Lord, it asks the courage of a lion!

DE MAUPRAT (*aside*).

The old conjurer! —
'Sdeath, he 'll inform me next how many cups
I drank at dinner! —

RICHELIEU.

This is scandalous,
Shaming your birth and blood. —— I tell you, Sir,
That you must pay your debts. —

DE MAUPRAT.

With all my heart,
My Lord. — Where shall I borrow, then, the money?

RICHELIEU (*aside and laughing*).

A humorous dare-devil! — The very man
To suit my purpose — ready, frank, and bold!

[*Rising and earnestly.*

Adrien de Mauprat, men have called me cruel; —
I am not; — I am *just!* — I found France rent asunder, —
The rich men despots, and the poor banditti; —
Sloth in the mart, and schism within the temple;
Brawls festering to Rebellion; and weak Laws
Rotting away with rust in antique sheaths. —
I have re-created France; and, from the ashes
Of the old feudal and decrepit carcase,
Civilisation on her luminous wings
Soars, phœnix-like, to Jove! — What was my art?

RICHELIEU (*waving his hand.*)

Not quite so quick, friend Huguet;
Messire de Mauprat is a patient man,
And he can wait! —

You have outrun your fortune;—
I blame you not, that you would be a beggar —
Each to his taste! — But I do charge you, Sir,
That, being beggared, you would coin false moneys
Out of that crucible, called DEBT. — To live
On means not yours — be brave in silks and laces,
Gallant in steeds — splendid in banquets; — all
Not *yours* — ungiven — uninherited — unpaid for; —
This is to be a trickster; and to filch
Men's art and labour, which to them is wealth,
Life, daily bread, — quitting all scores with — "Friend,
You 're troublesome!" — Why this, forgive me,
Is what — when done with less dainty grace —
Plain folks call "*Theft!*" — You owe eight thousand pistoles
Minus one crown, two liards! —

VIAGRA

My birthplace 'mid the vines of sunny Provence,
Perchance the stream that sparkles in my veins
Came from that wine of passionate life which, erst,
Glowed in the wild heart of the Troubadour:
And danger, which makes steadier courage wary,
But fevers me with an insane delight;
As one of old who on the mountain crags
Caught madness from a Mænad's haunting eyes.
Were you, my Lord, — whose path imperial power,
And the grave cares of reverent wisdom, guard
From all that tempts to folly meaner men, —]
Were you accursed with that which you inflicted —
By bed and board, dogged by one ghastly spectre —
The while within you youth beat high, and life
Grew lovelier from the neighbouring frown of death —
The heart no bud, nor fruit — save in those seeds
Most worthless, which spring up, bloom, bear, and wither
In the same hour — Were this your fate, perchance
You would have erred like me!

RICHELIEU.

I might, like you,
Have been a brawler and a reveller; — not,
Like you, a trickster and a thief. —

DE MAUPRAT (*advancing threateningly*).

Lord Cardinal!
Unsay those words! —

[HUGUET *deliberately raises the carbine.*

Brief told; what done, a volume! Wild debauch,
Turbulent riot: — for the morn the dice-box —
Noon claimed the duel — and the night the wassail;
These, your most holy, pure preparatives
For death and judgment. Do I wrong you, Sir?

DE MAUPRAT.

I was not always thus: — if changed my nature,
Blame that which changed my fate. — Alas, my Lord,
[There is a brotherhood which calm-eyed Reason
Can wot not of betwixt Despair and Mirth.

Were but the tool of slaughter — knowing naught,
Foreseeing naught, naught hoping, naught lamenting,
And for naught fit — save cutting throats for hire.
Deeds, marry, deeds!

DE MAUPRAT.

If you would deign to speak
Thus to your armies ere they march to battle,
Perchance your Eminence might have the pain
Of the throat-cutting to yourself.

RICHELIEU (*aside*).

He has wit,
This Mauprat — (*Aloud.*) Let it pass; there is against you
What you can less excuse.] Messire de Mauprat,
Doomed to sure death, how hast thou since consumed
The time allotted thee for serious thought
And solemn penitence?

DE MAUPRAT (*embarrassed*).

The time, my Lord?

RICHELIEU.

Is not the question plain? I 'll answer for thee.
Thou hast sought nor priest nor shrine: no sackcloth chafed
Thy delicate flesh. The rosary and the death's-head
Have not, with pious meditation, purged
Earth from the carnal gaze. What thou hast *not* done

F. C. Gordon

DE MAUPRAT.

To meet death face to face at last.

[RICHELIEU.

Your words
Are bold.

DE MAUPRAT.

My deeds have not belied them.

RICHELIEU.

Deeds!
O miserable delusion of man's pride!
Deeds! cities sacked, fields ravaged, hearths profaned,
Men butchered! In your hour of doom behold
The *deeds* you boast of! From rank showers of blood,
And the red light of blazing roofs, you build
The Rainbow Glory, and to shuddering Conscience
Cry, — Lo, the Bridge to Heaven!

DE MAUPRAT.

If war be sinful,
Your hand the gauntlet cast.

RICHELIEU.

It was so, Sir.
Note the distinction: — I weighed well the cause
Which made the standard holy; raised the war
But to secure the peace. France bled — I groaned;
But looked beyond; and, in the vista, saw
France saved, and I exulted. You — but you

Glide round unseen; — place thyself yonder (*pointing to the screen*); watch him;
If he show violence — (let me see thy carbine;
So, a good weapon;) — if he play the lion,
Why — the dog's death.

HUGUET.

I never miss my mark.

[*Exit* HUGUET; RICHELIEU *seats himself at the table, and slowly arranges the papers before him. Enter* DE MAUPRAT *preceded by* HUGUET, *who then retires behind the screen.*

RICHELIEU.

Approach, Sir. — Can you call to mind the hour,
Now three years since, when in this room, methinks,
Your presence honoured me?

DE MAUPRAT.

It is, my Lord,
One of my most —

RICHELIEU (*drily*).

Delightful recollections.

DE MAUPRAT (*aside*).

St. Denis! doth he make a jest of axe
And headsman?

RICHELIEU (*sternly*).

I did then accord you
A mercy ill requited — you still live!

RICHELIEU (*sternly*).

Well, girl!

JULIE.

Nay,
Smile on me — one smile more; there, now I'm happy.
Do not rank Mauprat with your foes; he is not,
I know he *is* not; he loves France too well.

RICHELIEU.

Not rank De Mauprat with my foes? So be it.
I 'll blot him from that list.

JULIE.

That 's my own father.
[*Exit* JULIE.

RICHELIEU (*ringing a small bell on the table*).
Huguet!

Enter HUGUET.

De Mauprat struggled not, nor murmured?

HUGUET.

No; proud and passive.

RICHELIEU.

Bid him enter. — Hold:
Look that he hide no weapon. Humph, despair
Makes victims sometimes victors. When he has entered

JULIE.

No; sable.

RICHELIEU.

So you note his colours, Julie?
Shame on you, child; look loftier. By the mass,
I have business with this modest gentleman.

JULIE.

You 're angry with poor Julie. There 's no cause.

RICHELIEU.

No cause — you hate my foes?

JULIE.

I do!

RICHELIEU.

Hate Mauprat?

JULIE.

Not Mauprat. No, not Adrien, father.

RICHELIEU.

Adrien!
Familiar! — Go, child; no, — not *that* way; — wait
In the tapestry chamber; I will join you, — go.

JULIE.

His brows are knit; — I dare not call him father!
But I *must* speak — Your Eminence ——

RICHELIEU.

Hem!
He has been tiresome too! — Anon.
[*Exit* HUGUET.

JULIE.

What doth he? —
I mean — I — Does your Eminence — that is —
Know you Messire de Mauprat?

RICHELIEU.

Well! — and you ——
Has he addressed you often?

JULIE.

Often! — No —
Nine times; — nay, ten; — the last time, by the lattice
Of the great staircase. — (*In a melancholy tone*). The Court sees him rarely.

RICHELIEU.

A bold and forward royster?

JULIE.

He? — nay, modest,
Gentle, and sad, methinks.

RICHELIEU.

Wears gold and azure?

RICHELIEU.

Fie! kings are never tiresome,
Save to their ministers. — What courtly gallants
Charm ladies most? — De Lourdiac, Longueville, or
The favourite Baradas?

JULIE.

A smileless man —
I fear and shun him.

RICHELIEU.

Yet he courts thee?

JULIE.

Then
He is more tiresome than his Majesty.

RICHELIEU.

Right, girl, shun Baradas. — Yet of these flowers
Of France, not one, in whose more honeyed breath
Thy heart hears Summer whisper?

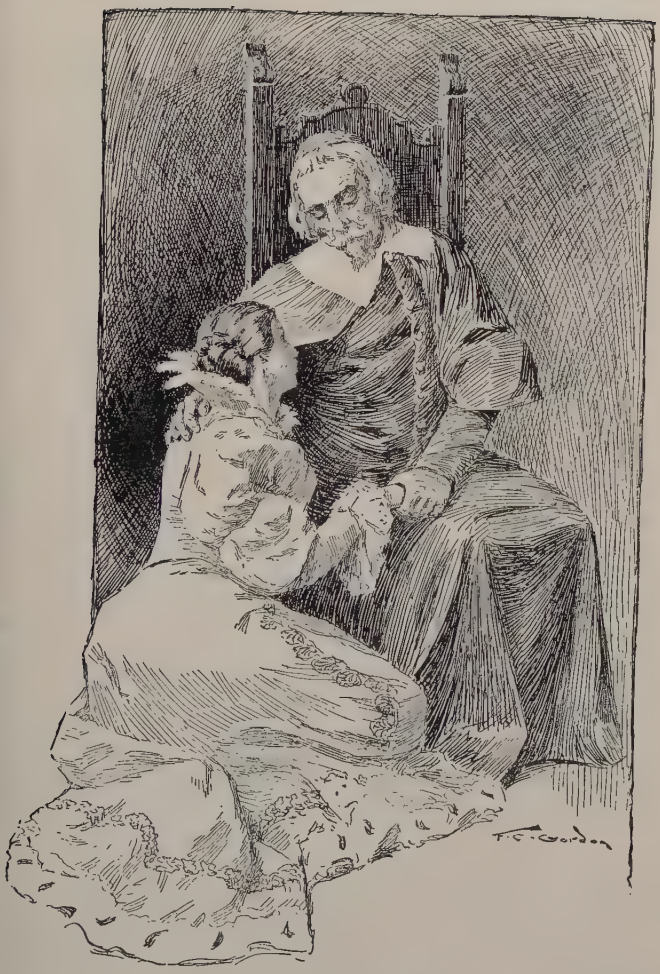
Enter HUGUET.

HUGUET.

The Chevalier
De Mauprat waits below.

JULIE (*starting up*).

De Mauprat!



JULIE.

Father!

A sweet word to an orphan.

RICHELIEU.

No ; not orphan
While Richelieu lives ; thy father loved me well ;
My friend, ere I had flatterers (now, I 'm great,
In other phrase, I 'm friendless) — he died young
In years, not service, and bequeathed thee to me ;
And thou shalt have a dowry, girl, to buy
Thy mate amidst the mightiest. Drooping? — sighs?
Art thou not happy at the court?

JULIE.

Not often.

RICHELIEU (*aside*).

Can she love Baradas? — Ah! at thy heart
There 's what can smile and sigh, blush and grow pale,
All in a breath? — Thou art admired — art young;
Does not his Majesty commend thy beauty —
Ask thee to sing to him? — and swear such sounds
Had smoothed the brows of Saul? —

JULIE.

He 's very tiresome,
Our worthy King.

I did omit an Ave in my matins, —
A grievous fault; — atone it for me, Joseph;
There is a scourge within; I am weak, you strong.
It were but charity to take my sin
On such broad shoulders. Exercise is healthful.

JOSEPH.

I! guilty of such criminal presumption
As to mistake myself for you — No, never!
Think it not! — (*Aside.*) Troth, a pleasant invitation!
[*Exit* JOSEPH.

Enter JULIE DE MORTEMAR.

RICHELIEU.

That 's my sweet Julie! — why, upon this face
Blushes such daybreak, one might swear the Morning
Were come to visit Tithon.

JULIE (*placing herself at his feet*).

Are you gracious? —
May I say "Father"?

RICHELIEU.

Now and ever!

RICHELIEU.

Ha! ha!

I have another bride for Baradas.

JOSEPH.

You, my Lord?

RICHELIEU.

Ay — more faithful than the love
Of fickle woman: — when the head lies lowliest,
Clasping him fondest; — Sorrow never knew
So sure a soother, — and her bed is stainless!

JOSEPH (*aside*).

If of the grave he speaks, I do not wonder
That priests are bachelors!

Enter FRANÇOIS.

FRANÇOIS.

Mademoiselle de Mortemar.

RICHELIEU.

Most opportune — admit her.

[*Exit* FRANÇOIS.

In my closet
You 'll find a rosary, Joseph; ere you tell
Three hundred beads, I 'll summon you. — Stay,
Joseph; —

Within closed doors she never hears; — by chance
Taking the air at keyholes — Senseless puppet!
No ears — nor eyes! — and yet she says — "She loves me!"
Go on ——

JOSEPH.

Your ward has charmed the King ——

RICHELIEU.

Out on you!
Have I not, one by one, from such fair shoots
Plucked the insidious ivy of his love?
And shall it creep around my blossoming tree,
Where innocent thoughts, like happy birds, make music
That spirits in Heaven might hear? — They 're sinful too,
Those passionate surfeits of the rampant flesh,
The Church condemns them; and to us, my Joseph,
The props and pillars of the Church, most hurtful.
The King is weak — whoever the King loves
Must rule the King; the lady loves another,
The other rules the lady — thus we 're balked
Of our own proper sway — The King must have
No goddess but the State: — the State — That 's Richelieu!

JOSEPH.

This not the worst; — Louis, in all decorous,
And deeming you her least compliant guardian,
Would veil his suit by marriage with his minion,
Your prosperous foe, Count Baradas!

RICHELIEU.

A very wooden head then! Well?

JOSEPH.

The favourite,

Count Baradas —

RICHELIEU.

A weed of hasty growth;

First gentleman of the chamber — titles, lands,
And the King's ear! — It cost me six long winters
To mount as high, as in six little moons
This painted lizard —— But I hold the ladder,
And when I shake — he falls! What more?

JOSEPH.

A scheme

To make your orphan-ward an instrument
To aid your foes. You placed her with the Queen,
One of the royal chamber, — as a watch
I' th' enemy's quarters —

RICHELIEU.

And the silly child

Visits me daily, — calls me "Father," — prays
Kind Heaven to bless me — And for all the rest,
As well have placed a doll about the Queen!
She does not heed who frowns — who smiles; with whom
The King confers in whispers; notes not when
Men who last week were foes, are found in corners
Mysteriously affectionate; words spoken

Then, by the aid of Bouillon, and the Spaniard,
I will dethrone the King; and all — ha! — ha! —
All, in despite of my Lord Cardinal!

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A room in the Palais Cardinal, the walls hung with arras. A large screen in one corner. A table covered with books, papers, &c. A rude clock in a recess. Busts, statues, bookcases, weapons of different periods and banners suspended over RICHELIEU'S *chair.*

RICHELIEU *and* JOSEPH.

RICHELIEU.

And so you think this new conspiracy
The craftiest trap yet laid for the old fox? ——
Fox! — Well, I like the nickname! — What did Plutarch
Say of the Greek Lysander?

JOSEPH.

I forget.

RICHELIEU.

That where the lion's skin fell short, he eked it
Out with the fox's! A great statesman, Joseph,
That same Lysander!

JOSEPH.

Orleans heads the traitors.

HUGUET.

Messire De Mauprat, I arrest you! — Follow
To the Lord Cardinal.

DE MAUPRAT.

You see, my friend,
I 'm out of my suspense! — the tiger 's played
Long enough with his prey. — Farewell! — Hereafter
Say, when men name me, "Adrien de Mauprat
Lived without hope, and perished without fear!"

[*Exeunt* DE MAUPRAT, HUGUET, *&c.*

BARADAS.

Farewell! — I trust for ever! I designed thee
For Richelieu's murderer —— but, as well his martyr!
In childhood you the stronger — and I cursed you;
In youth the fairer — and I cursed you still;
And now my rival! — While the name of Julie
Hung on thy lips — I smiled — for then I saw,
In my mind's eye, the cold and grinning Death
Hang o'er thy head the pall! — Ambition, Love,
Ye twin-born stars of daring destinies,
Sit in my house of Life! — By the King's aid
I will be Julie's husband — in despite
Of my Lord Cardinal! — by the King's aid
I will be minister of France — in spite
Of my Lord Cardinal! — And then — what then?
The King loves Julie — feeble Prince — false master —

[*Producing and gazing on the parchment.*

(Like some severer Grace that leads the choir
Of her sweet sisters) every airy motion
Attunes to such chaste charm, that Passion holds
His burning breath, and will not with a sigh
Dissolve the spell that binds him! — Oh those eyes
That woo the earth — shadowing more soul than lurks
Under the lids of Psyche! — Go! — thy lip
Curls at the purfled phrases of a lover —
Love thou, and if thy love be deep as mine,
Thou wilt not laugh at poets.

BARADAS (*aside*).

With each word
Thou wak'st a jealous demon in my heart,
And my hand clutches at my hilt. —]

DE MAUPRAT (*gaily*).

No more! —
I love! — Your breast holds both my secrets; — Never
Unbury either! — Come, while yet we may,
We 'll bask us in the noon of rosy life: —
Lounge through the gardens, — flaunt it in the taverns, —
Laugh, — game, — drink, — feast: — If so confined my days,
Faith, I 'll enclose the nights. — Pshaw! not so grave;
I 'm a true Frenchman! — *Vive la bagatelle!*

[*As they are going out, enter* HUGUET *and four* Arquebusiers.

DE MAUPRAT.

Who, lonely in the midnight tent,
Gazed on the watch-fires in the sleepless air,
Nor chose one star amidst the clustering hosts
To bless it in the name of some fair face
Set in his spirit, as that star in Heaven?
For our divine Affections, like the Spheres,
Move ever, ever musical.

BARADAS.

You speak
As one who fed on poetry.

DE MAUPRAT.

Why, man,
The thoughts of lovers stir with poetry
As leaves with summer-wind. — The heart that loves
Dwells in an Eden, hearing angel-lutes,
As Eve in the First Garden. Hast thou seen
My Julie, and not felt it henceforth dull
To live in the common world — and talk in words
That clothe the feelings of the frigid herd? —
Upon the perfumed pillow of her lips —
As on his native bed of roses flushed
With Paphian skies — Love smiling sleeps: — Her voice
The blest interpreter of thoughts as pure
As virgin wells where Dian takes delight,
Or fairies dip their changelings! — In the maze
Of her harmonious beauties — Modesty

Of that too great a subject — join your friends,
Free France, and save yourself.

DE MAUPRAT.

Hush! Richelieu bears
A charmed life; — to all who have braved his power,
One common end — the block.

BARADAS.

Nay, if he live,
The block your doom; —

DE MAUPRAT.

Better the victim, Count,
Than the assassin. — France requires a Richelieu,
But does not need a Mauprat. Truce to this; —
All time one midnight, where my thoughts are spectres.
What to me fame? — What love? —

BARADAS.

Yet dost thou love *not?*

DE MAUPRAT.

Love? — I am young —

BARADAS.

And Julie fair! (*Aside.*) It is so,
Upon the margin of the grave — his hand
Would pluck the rose that I would win and wear!
[(*Aloud.*) Thou lov'st —

BARADAS.

O tender pity! — O most charming prospect!
Blown into atoms by a bomb, or drilled
Into a cullender by gunshot! — Well? —

DE MAUPRAT.

You have heard if I fought bravely. — Death became
Desired as Daphne by the eager Day-god.
Like him I chased the nymph — to grasp the laurel!
I could not die!

BARADAS.

Poor fellow!

DE MAUPRAT.

When the Cardinal
Reviewed the troops, his eye met mine; — he frowned,
Summoned me forth — "How 's this?" quoth he; "you have shunned
The sword — beware the axe! — 't will fall one day!"
He left me thus — we were recalled to Paris,
And — you know all!

BARADAS.

And, knowing this, why halt you,
Spelled by the rattlesnake, — while in the breasts
Of your firm friends beat hearts, that vow the death
Of your grim tyrant? — Wake! — Be one of us;
The time invites — the King detests the Cardinal,
Dares not disgrace — but groans to be delivered

To join the Duke in Languedoc, I (then
The down upon my lip — less man than boy)
Leading young valours, reckless as myself,
Seized on the town of Faviaux, and displaced
The Royal banners for the Rebel. Orleans,
(Never too daring,) when I reached the camp,
Blamed me for acting — mark — *without his orders :*
Upon this quibble Richelieu razed my name
Out of the general pardon.

BARADAS.

Yet released you
From the Bastile ——

DE MAUPRAT.

To call me to his presence
And thus address me : — " You have seized a town
Of France, without the orders of your leader,
And for this treason, but one sentence — DEATH."

BARADAS.

Death !

DE MAUPRAT.

" I have pity on your youth and birth,
Nor wish to glut the headsman ; — join your troop,
Now on the march against the Spaniards ; — change
The traitor's scaffold for the soldier's grave : —
Your memory stainless — they who shared your crime
Exiled or dead — your king shall never learn it."

The grave yawns dark before me! — I *will* trust you; —
Hating the Cardinal, and beguiled by Orleans,
You know I joined the Languedoc revolt —
Was captured — sent to the Bastile ——

BARADAS.

But shared
The general pardon, which the Duke of Orleans
Won for himself and all in the revolt,
Who but obeyed his orders.

DE MAUPRAT.

Note the phrase; —
"*Obeyed his orders.*" Well, when on my way

BARADAS.

You have lost—
Yet are not sad.

DE MAUPRAT.

Sad! — Life and gold have wings,
And must fly one day: — open, then, their cages
And wish them merry.

BARADAS.

You 're a strange enigma: —
Fiery in war — and yet to glory lukewarm;
All mirth in action — in repose all gloom ——
These are extremes in which the unconscious heart
Betrays the fever of deep-fixed disease.
Confide in me! our young days rolled together
In the same river, glassing the same stars
That smile i' the heaven of hope; alike we made
Bright-wingèd steeds of our unformed chimeras,
Spurring the fancies upward to the air,
Wherein we shaped fair castles from the cloud.
Fortune of late has severed us — and led
Me to the rank of Courtier, Count, and Favourite, —
You to the titles of the wildest gallant
And bravest knight in France; are you content?
No; — trust in me — some gloomy secret ——

DE MAUPRAT.

Ay: —
A secret that doth haunt me, as, of old,
Men were possessed of fiends! — Where'er I turn,

BARADAS.

I have marked it,
And I will learn the wherefore.

DE MAUPRAT.

The Egyptian
Dissolved her richest jewel in a draught:
Would I could so melt time and all its treasures,
And drain it thus.

[*Drinking.*

DE BERINGHEN.

Come, gentlemen, what say ye,
A walk on the parade?

OMNES.

Ay; come, De Mauprat.

DE MAUPRAT.

Pardon me; we shall meet again ere nightfall.

BARADAS.

I 'll stay and comfort Mauprat.

DE BERINGHEN.

Comfort! — when
We gallant fellows have run out a friend,
There 's nothing left — except to run him through!
There 's the last act of friendship.

DE MAUPRAT.

Let me keep
That favour in reserve; in all beside
Your most obedient servant.

[*Exeunt* DE BERINGHEN, *&c.* *Manent* DE MAUPRAT *and* BARADAS.

OMNES.

Lost! Ha, ha! — poor De Mauprat!

DE BERINGHEN.

One throw more?

DE MAUPRAT.

No; I am bankrupt (*pushing gold*). There goes all — except
My honour and my sword.

[*They rise.*

DE BERINGHEN.

Long cloaks and honour
Went out of vogue together, when we found
We got on much more rapidly without them;
The sword, indeed, is never out of fashion, —
The Devil has care of *that.*

FIRST GAMESTER.

Ay, take the sword
To Cardinal Richelieu: — he gives gold for steel,
When worn by brave men.

DE MAUPRAT.

Richelieu!

DE BERINGHEN (*to* BARADAS).

At that name
He changes colour, bites his nether lip.
Ev'n in his brightest moments whisper "Richelieu,"
And you cloud all his sunshine.

DE BERINGHEN.

Double the stakes.

DE MAUPRAT.

Done.

DE BERINGHEN.

Bravo; faith, it shames me
To bleed a purse already *in extremis.*

DE MAUPRAT.

Nay, as you 've had the patient to yourself
So long, no other doctor should dispatch it,

[DE MAUPRAT *throws and loses.*

(Whereto is joined the schedule of our treaty
With the Count-Duke, the Richelieu of the Escurial),
Bouillon will join his army with the Spaniard,
March on to Paris, — there, dethrone the King:
You will be Regent; I, and ye, my Lords,
Form the new Council. — So much for the core
Of our great scheme.

ORLEANS.

But Richelieu is an Argus;
One of his hundred eyes will light upon us,
And then — good-bye to life.

BARADAS.

To gain the prize
We must destroy the Argus: — ay, my Lord,
The scroll the core, but blood must fill the veins
Of our design; — while this dispatched to Bouillon,
Richelieu dispatched to Heaven! — The last *my* charge.
Meet here to-morrow night. *You*, Sir, as first
In honour and in hope, meanwhile select
Some trusty knave to bear the scroll to Bouillon;
'Midst Richelieu's foes *I'll* find some desperate hand
To strike for vengeance, while we stride to power.

ORLEANS.

So be it; — to-morrow, midnight. — Come, my Lords.

[*Exeunt* ORLEANS, *and the* Courtiers *in his train. Those at the other table rise, salute* ORLEANS, *and re-seat themselves.*

ORLEANS (*aside*).

Nay, Count,
You may trust her; she doats on me; no house
So safe as Marion's. [At our statelier homes
The very walls do play the eaves-dropper.
There 's not a sunbeam creeping o'er our floors
But seems a glance from that malignant eye
Which reigns o'er France; our fatal greatness lives
In the sharp glare of one relentless day.
But Richelieu's self forgets to fear the sword
The myrtle hides; and Marion's silken robe
Casts its kind charity o'er fiercer sins
Than those which haunt the rosy path between
The lip and eye of beauty. — Oh, no house
So safe as Marion's.]

BARADAS.

Still, we have a secret.
And oil and water — woman and a secret —
Are hostile properties.

ORLEANS.

Well — Marion, see
How the play prospers yonder.

[MARION *goes to the next table, looks on for a few moments, then exit.*

BARADAS (*producing a parchment*).

I have now
All the conditions drawn; it only needs
Our signatures: upon receipt of this,

FIRST DAY.

Scene I.

A room in the house of Marion de Lorme ; *a table towards the front of the stage* (*with wine, fruits, &c.*), *at which are seated* Baradas, Four Courtiers, *splendidly dressed in the costume of* 1641–2 ; — *the* Duke of Orleans *reclining on a large fauteuil ;* — Marion de Lorme *standing at the back of his chair, offers him a goblet, and then retires. At another table,* De Beringhen, De Mauprat, *playing at dice ; other* Courtiers, *of inferior rank to those at the table of the* Duke, *looking on.*

ORLEANS (*drinking*).

Here 's to our enterprise ! —

BARADAS (*glancing at* MARION).

Hush, Sir ! —

NOTE.

The length of the Play necessarily requires curtailments on the Stage, — the principal of which are enclosed within brackets. Many of the passages thus omitted, however immaterial to the audience, must obviously be such as the *reader* would be least inclined to dispense with, — viz. those which, without being absolutely essential to the business of the Stage, contain either the subtler strokes of character, or the more poetical embellishments of description. An important consequence of these suppressions is, that Richelieu himself is left, too often and too unrelievedly, to positions which place him in an *amiable* light, without that shadowing forth of his more sinister motives and his fiercer qualities, which is attempted in the written play. Thus the *character* takes a degree of credit due only to the *situation*. To judge the Author's conception of Richelieu fairly, and to estimate how far it is consistent with historical portraiture, the Play must be *read*.

requires us to contrast the celebrated Cardinal; — not disguising his foibles or his vices, but not unjust to the grander qualities (especially the love of country) by which they were often dignified, and, at times, redeemed.

The historical drama is the concentration of historical events. In the attempt to place upon the stage the picture of an era, that licence with dates and details, which Poetry permits, and which the highest authorities in the drama of France herself have sanctioned, has been, though not unsparingly, indulged. The conspiracy of the Duc de Bouillon is, for instance, amalgamated with the *dénouement* of *The Day of Dupes;* and circumstances connected with the treason of Cinq Mars (whose brilliant youth and gloomy catastrophe tend to subvert poetic and historic justice, by seducing us to forget his base ingratitude and his perfidious apostasy) are identified with the fate of the earlier favourite, Baradas, whose sudden rise and as sudden fall passed into a proverb. I ought to add that the noble romance of "Cinq Mars" suggested one of the scenes in the fifth act; and that for the conception of some portion of the intrigue connected with De Mauprat and Julie, I am, with great alterations of incident, and considerable if not entire reconstruction of character, indebted to an early and admirable novel by the author of "Picciola."

London, *March*, 1839.

long impunity of every licence required stern examples, — that he was beset by perils and intrigues, which gave a certain excuse to the subtlest inventions of self-defence, — that his ambition was inseparably connected with a passionate love for the glory of his country, — and that, if he was her dictator, he was not less her benefactor. It has been fairly remarked, by the most impartial historians, that he was no less generous to merit than severe to crime, — that, in the various departments of the State, the Army, and the Church, he selected and distinguished the ablest aspirants, — that the wars which he conducted were, for the most part, essential to the preservation of France, and Europe itself, from the formidable encroachments of the Austrian House, — that, in spite of those wars, the people were not oppressed with exorbitant imposts, — and that he left the kingdom he had governed in a more flourishing and vigorous state than at any former period of the French history, or at the decease of Louis XIV.

The cabals formed against this great statesman were not carried on by the patriotism of public virtue, or the emulation of equal talent; they were but court struggles, in which the most worthless agents had recourse to the most desperate means. In each, as I have before observed, we see combined the twofold attempt to murder the minister and to betray the country. Such, then, are the agents, and such the designs with which truth, in the Drama as in History,

PREFACE.

THE administration of Cardinal Richelieu, whom (despite all his darker qualities) Voltaire and History justly consider the true architect of the French monarchy, and the great parent of French civilization, is characterized by features alike tragic and comic. A weak king — an ambitious favourite; a despicable conspiracy against the minister, nearly always associated with a dangerous treason against the State — these, with little variety of names and dates, constitute the eventful cycle through which, with a dazzling ease, and an arrogant confidence, the great luminary fulfilled its destinies. Blent together, in startling contrast, we see the grandest achievements and the pettiest agents; — the spy — the mistress — the capuchin; — the destruction of feudalism; — the humiliation of Austria; — the dismemberment of Spain.

Richelieu himself is still what he was in his own day, — a man of two characters. If, on the one hand, he is justly represented as inflexible and vindictive, crafty and unscrupulous; so, on the other, it cannot be denied that he was placed in times in which the

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Louis the Thirteenth.

Gaston, Duke of Orleans, *brother to Louis the Thirteenth.*

Baradas, *favourite of the King, First Gentleman of the Chamber, Premier Ecuyer, &c.*

Cardinal Richelieu.

The Chevalier de Mauprat.

The Sieur de Beringhen, *in attendance on the King, one of the Conspirators.*

Joseph, *a Capuchin, Richelieu's confidant.*

Huguet, *an officer of Richelieu's household guard, — a Spy.*

François, *First Page to Richelieu.*

First Courtier.

Captain of the Archers.

First, Second, Third Secretaries of State.

Governor of the Bastile.

Gaoler.

Courtiers, Pages, Conspirators, Officers, Soldiers, &c.

Julie de Mortemar, *an Orphan, ward to Richelieu.*

Marion de Lorme, *Mistress to Orleans, but in Richelieu's pay.*

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RICHELIEU: OR, THE CONSPIRACY.

PR
4918
.A1

TO

THE MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE, K. B.,

ETC., ETC.

This Drama is Inscribed,

IN TRIBUTE TO THE TALENTS WHICH COMMAND AND
THE QUALITIES WHICH ENDEAR RESPECT.

97080

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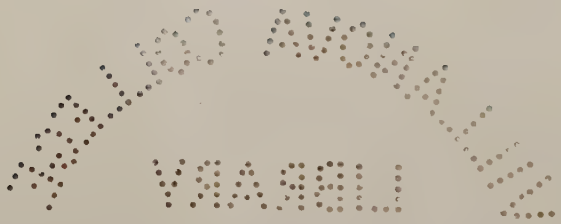

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Edward, Lord Lytton

RICHELIEU; OR THE CONSPIRACY

BY EDWARD BULWER LORD LYTTON * Illustrated by F. C. GORDON

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Isabel Frances Graham.

January 1897

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